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Ireland, and, especially in the intermediate stages of the child's development, from seven to puberty, it gets full play.

It is during those years that the characteristic relationship between father and son is developed in rural communities. The son has suffered a remove from the previous almost exclusive control of its mother, in which an affective content of sympathy and indulgence was predominant, and is brought into contact for the first time with the father and older men. But the transfer is not completed. There is a hiatus in his development through the years of school when his participation in men's work and his relationship with his father has little chance of developing into an effective partnership. A real union of interests does not take place until after Confirmation and school-leaving, when for the first time his exclusive contacts and his entire day-to-day activity, particularly in farm work, will be with his father and the older men.

This fact colors greatly the relationship of father and son, as far as affective content goes. There is none of the close companionship and intimate sympathy which characterizes, at least ideally, the relationship in other groups. Where such exists, it is a matter for surprised comment to the small farmers. In its place there is developed, necessarily perhaps, a marked respect, expressing itself in the tabooing of many actions, such as smoking, drinking, and physical contact of any sort, which can be readily observed in any small farm family. Coupled with this is the lifelong subordination the retention of the name "boy" implies, which is never relaxed even in the one sphere in which farmer father and son can develop an intense community of interest — farm work. Nothing prevents the development of great mutual pride, the boy in his experienced and skillful mentor, tutor, and captain in work, and the man in a worthy and skillful successor and fellow workman, but on the other hand everything within the behavior developed in the rela-

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593 tionship militates against the growth of close mutual sym-
[578] pathy. As a result, the antagonisms inherent in such a situation often break through very strongly when conflicts arise.

The division of labor in the masculine sphere between father and sons, then, is more than an arrangement in farm management. It is very directly part of the systems of controls, duties, and sentiments which make up the whole family life. The apprenticeship and the long subordination of the sons in farm work are reflections of the entirety of their relationship to parents; it is impossible to treat the two spheres of behavior separately.

Similarly, the relationships in farm work between the other members of the household cannot be treated separately.

593 On the other hand, the relationship of mother and son
561 has a very different content. Like that between father and
562 son, it is the product of years of development. It is marked, too, by a similar retention of subordinate status on the part of the son. In farm work the boy is subject to commands of his mother even when, fully adult, he has passed over exclusively to men's work. It is for this reason that many Irish farm widows with grown sons can successfully manage a farm for many years before they ultimately make it over upon a son's marriage, and from their restricted scope within the household and haggard effectively direct operations in the masculine sphere. In such cases, the woman retains control. Even in such an important matter as her son's eventual marriage she has a very dominant voice.

593 But within the scope of such a subordination there is a quite different affective history. The relationship is the first and earliest into which a child enters. It is very close, intimate, and all-embracing for the first years of life; only gradually does the experience of the child expand to include brothers, sisters, and, last, the older male members of the household.

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man called upon his brother-in-law to lend him his son to help drive his cattle to the fair. In a case similar to the last, a violent quarrel arose because an uncle, who "had right" to lend a son badly needed in doing some fence work, refused to do so. And in the same scale of value a family which did not attend the funeral of a relative was subjected to great criticism for being "unfriendly."

In fact, failure to fulfill the pattern of conduct demanded by extended family obligations leads often to punitive action on the part of the aggrieved party. Near R— a small farmer, who neglected his garden and forced his father-in-law to send up loads of potatoes for his wife's support, was finally beaten up one night in his own house by the irate in-laws. Ordinarily, of course, failure to fulfill such obligations either in directly social situations or in agricultural coöperation does not lead to such violent conflict, but rather to an estrangement. The niggardly "friend," especially the one who refuses or fails to return an obligation, is held up to general condemnation, not only by his kindred but by the whole community. The position of a small farmer near but not in Luogh was the result of such failure. He was regarded by all his neighbors and kindred as a "miser" and a "Jew" and on several occasions was accused of petty thefts by them, which perpetuated the breach. As a result he lived as a recluse, refusing even to visit others; in return he was not greeted by his "friends."

The obligations of this sort[2] extend to visiting and to the hospitality which the Irish countryman deems so great a virtue. "A sup of tea" and such food as eggs and bread is

[2] The word *cóir* (a fit and traditional right or duty) corresponds almost exactly with the full range of the small farmer's obligations, as we have seen. It well reflects the farmer's habit in two other uses. The phrase *cóir mhaith* means good food. When the speaker says, *tá cóir mhaith agam ansud* (there's a good feed for me there), he refers not so much to the food itself as to the social situation in which he finds himself well provided for. And the term of address, *duine cóir* (worthy fellow), indicates that "worthiness" springs from a fit observance of one's obligations.

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674 herein described. A case in County Clare in K— parish [6] shows the same provenance of conflict in a disturbance of the traditional pattern. The following extract from the diary of one of the authors gives the setting of the dispute:

674 January 19th. K – District Court. Nothing much in court today but the following case: Two lads about nineteen were up
● 578 for having tarred the house of Tim Nihill, the publican, night before the last fair. This wasn't an isolated occurrence; attempts have been made to intimidate Nihill over a period of years. The guards agree he is himself a peaceable citizen. Both Mr. –, the justice, and Mr. –, the local superintendent of civic guards, agreed that the lads were only "tools of some one behind the scenes who is inciting them." The justice bound them over, gave them a stiff fine. Later he explained to me that a certain Mr. Mulvaney has been calling Nihill a land-grabber in the districts and setting the lads on him. Last year the house was fired into in the night. It all arises out of a farm which Nihill owns and which Mulvaney says ought to be his. Mulvaney is
[583] landless now, only a farm laborer. His mother, who had the farm, was to have left it to him, but he made a runaway match with a servant girl and his mother wouldn't let them into the house. So she sold the farm to Nihill for cash and some debts outstanding and Mulvaney has been blackguarding Nihill ever since.

583 This story introduces the whole position of "runaway matches," as elopements are called. There are a few instances of coercion into matches. The autobiographic sketch of one Hannah M—, an old woman, the widow of a petty shopkeeper, illustrates the form which it can take. To paraphrase her:

She is eighty-four, and guess how long she has been a widow. forty years. She's been behind the counter all the time. She has a sister in America with nine children. The sister sent her over her passage, but the family tore it up and married her here in Ennis. She wanted to be a teacher; the work was easy, the holidays (ample) and it was a good job. There were three candidates

[6] Fictitious names for persons and smaller places have been substituted in this and following incidents.

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her year and she got first. At that time her sister sent over the passage money, and she was about to go when they stopped her and married her into this shop. Her sister was coming over before the marriage but her fiancé wouldn't let her go for fear someone would snatch her up too.

Ordinarily, as so many of the examples we have already given show, marriage in the matchmaking system is a matter of free agreement within the traditional setting. Love enters the situation, however, only to complicate it. A runaway match upsets the whole pattern, the interplay of dowries, land, and portions of it for children, the transition between adulthood and old age for the parental couple. There are other considerations, too, which account for the disturbance a runaway match creates, such as those of class involved in "marrying beneath" one, but they are outside our present subject.

The following story illustrates the case. A countryman is describing a happening in his district:

> Tom L— was making a match for his daughter with a fine farm of land, and they got as far as picking the gander [the name of a feast given by the bride's people slightly before the wedding]. They were all up there eating and drinking and dancing all night. Now a fellow from Ennistymon [town] came to it, but he was such an ordinary fellow he was not even invited into the front of the house but stayed in the kitchen. He was so poor and lazy, he brought a little turf to market sometimes, but that was all. Next day, the girl came down to the chapel to be married, and before they knew it, didn't she run off with this fellow. Tom cut her off and disowned her, and she's living in Limerick with her fellow now, but it might be in Australia for all Tom will do for her.

Even when matters have not gone so far, the runaway match causes a grave disturbance and destroys the cohesion of the family. The following account given by a publican in Ennis of country acquaintances shows that reconciliation occurs after a time, but that the disruptive effect upon the

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583 family is severe. We give the statement in detail in order
● 578 to show the general situation as he saw it. He is a townsman, and somewhat detached.

> The daughter on the farm has to wait till all the sons are got ready for their going off and maybe have been given their passage to America or money to set up in business or to settle on the land. But there are runaway matches all the time, they fall in love, they run off together, and they come in here and take work away from the laborers here. It takes a lot of love and courage because the son is usually cut off and the daughter leaves a very good place for nothing but a cabin and they get none of the money. Maybe after several years the girl will get her fortune, but not always. I remember Jerry N — whose father was very well off as farmers go, but he wouldn't marry the girl they picked for him and took up with a servant girl instead. He's driving a hackney now and lives in a cabin with a flock of children. Jimmy L — ran off but he gradually became reconciled with his people. The father had a good farm of sixty acres, and so had the girl, but the young fellow got nothing out of it. His father helps a little now, sending down a bag of potatoes.

602 Another case which the authors had under observation
593 from time to time illustrates not only the matchmaking
578 system but the general family setting in which marriage
627 takes place and farm life moves. Sanctions for conduct aggrieving the families are applied by the families themselves. The case is long but worth quoting in the words of the teller for its comprehensive character:

> There was a girl of the O'Rourkes from D —, they have a farm out there and she married a fellow named Murphy up in C —. She was a school teacher out in England for several years and she became great with this fellow the farmer, and she used to send him money over from England for when they would get married. She sent about two hundred pounds in all. She has an aunt up in C — married up there and it was all the fault of the aunt. She came home and she hadn't yet told her people anything about it. She was just about ready to get married to the fellow and she told them that she was going to get married. They agreed. Then she said she was going to get married to

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Murphy and they tried to argue her out of it, but she said it was too far gone now and she was committed to marry him, so they hastily gave her their blessing. He lived in a big house up by C— and had sixty acres.

Well, he was a sort of uncouth kind of chap, rough, and she was what you might say anglified, or citified. She wanted to brighten up the house and make it nice and hang up curtains and that sort of thing. He thought the reins of the horse would do for the curtains and so on, and it came to a fight between them, a clash of wills, and in the end, as it must, the stronger one won out; that is, the man's. She got hysterical and he cast round for ways of getting rid of her, and he sent up to Ennistymon for the doctor to come down and examine her to commit her to the asylum. He didn't send her up to C— though that was nearer and in his district, but he sent up for Dr. MacNulty to Ennistymon, leaving Dr. Starr in C— so as to get someone who wouldn't know the case.

The married sister of the wife was staying in the house at the time and he was driving her home. He told her the doctor was coming, and she said, "You are doing wrong," and made him turn round and go back to the house where Dr. MacNulty was examining the hysterical woman. Then the married sister got her brother and father to take her back to D—. They came up with Father Brendan of Ennis here and took her away down to D—. After a time they got up a party and invited him down for a reconciliation.

After a while she went back to live with him. He started it again and got her hysterical and called in another doctor, who said that there was nothing wrong with the woman.

One night the three brothers of the girl and her father came up to the house and one went round to the back door and the others went in the front and they caught the fellow. They were going to force him to sign receipts for the money the daughter gave him. Country people demand receipts for money they give and they are right, but the girl hadn't liked to ask and hadn't got any, so her people were going to step in and get them themselves. Murphy had rifled her belongings and torn off his name from all the receipts he had sent her to England. They came in and said that he was lucky he was going to escape with his life. No one in their family had ever been in the asylum and no one belonging to them had ever been insane or robbers

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602 593 578 627 and that he was trying to black them with the disgrace of it. The girl ran in but they threw her out into the hall where her father caught her and held her. They said that all the people belonging to him were thieves, and that two of them, two uncles of his, his mother's brothers, were convicted for robbery and that all his people before him had been insane, and that he was trying to black the name of a good family. In the end they caught him and beat him till he consented to sign the receipts. They gave him a good hiding.

The teller drew his own conclusions from the case:

If the girl had listened to her parents, they would have told her all this and saved her. But she went on and married right ahead on her own advice. She probably thought she was doing well in marrying into sixty acres.

It is interesting that the application of sanctions does not confine itself to a single dereliction. In this case, according to the storyteller:

[461] Murphy was a terrible lazy farmer and wouldn't even till a patch of ground for a garden for himself or his stock, and the woman's people had to send up a load of potatoes for them. They told him when they beat him if he didn't turn into a farmer and do a man's work, till his garden, and provide, they would be up again and make him do it.

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592 888 737 578 There is no chance that the old people would give up the land but for the pension, and there is no hurrying them. Before the old-age pension the father would keep the fat of the land and there would be argument between them, the young woman and the old woman slashing each other with tongs, the doors broke, and it would be two dwellings in the house, like, but since the old-age pension, there are no rows and, if there are, then they make it up with the old people for the ten bob a week.

592 888 If the transition is smooth, there need be no such violence of dispute as the last quotation describes. Each of the members of the household must adopt a new role in relation to the others. The old man abdicates his controlling position with his transference of the farm to his son. Usually such a change goes smoothly enough. If the son can still seem to defer to superior experience and judgment and refer decisions to the old man, all goes well. The happiest compromise is that suggested in the statement of one countryman:

> Every morning, even after I was married, I would go to the old man and ask him what he thought I should do for the day, and the old man would say that it is now time to do this or that or that the cows should have something done for them or the garden should be prepared. I would go then and spend twenty to thirty minutes doing what the old man said, and then go about my own business.

592 606 It is in the feminine province of farm work and household control that the transition is most difficult. Under the patrilocal type of marriage here described, the bride is a stranger and of necessity cannot rely upon the experience of an association of years in order to meet the new conditions, as can father and son. In the graphic phrase of the people, she is the "new woman."

For her the transition brings a violent uprooting from prior attachments. Unlike her urban sister, she has little of the ideal of romantic love to help her over the crisis. Consequently her introduction into the new household is

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gradual, and her assumption of her new duties takes place over a moderately lengthy period. Two considerations, of course, are her primary inspiration in moments of stress: first, that she is now a fully adult woman with a household of her own although she must still share its control with her mother-in-law; and second, that the customary usage of the countryside provides her with an occasional escape back to her own people still on the farm at home. The following quotation expresses one woman's remembrance of her emotional difficulty. It is interesting that it is given expression most effectively in terms of Christmas, the family festival *par excellence* in Ireland:

> When I first came here, I didn't like it; I thought I couldn't stand living here, and I was always wanting to go home. I could go home, then, every fortnight. Now it doesn't matter so much and I go home about twice a year. I especially miss home at Christmas time because it is then that you miss those you always used to see, and Christmas doesn't seem right if they are not in it.

But for the bride, as for the old people, the transition brings forth a new behavior, and a new habit in her relationship with them. She must learn a nice balance between her new freedom and new full status and the continued control and the vested interest of her mother-in-law. It is a matter between the two women of the household; the father and son prefer to remain neutral witnesses to the process. The statement of one countryman illustrates well the possibilities and the type of new attitude and behavior the young woman must learn to make a satisfactory adjustment:

> When a marriage is made, an agreement is drawn up so that the man hands over to his son the land, but makes certain reservations. A new woman is brought into the house. The wife may have modern ideas and be "hoity-toity" about the way to do things, and the old woman and the new woman wouldn't get along. The old man without interfering would light his pipe and go out until the squabble was over.

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592 606 578 It might get so bad that the old woman would get up and leave and go live with her daughter. She would do this if the mother of her daughter's husband were dead, even though the father might still be living in the house. But squabbles are bad things and, if the new woman would ask the old persons their opinion and how to do this and that, there would never be any trouble and the new wife could go ahead and do just as she pleased and the old people would think that she was doing it the way that she said. The daughter-in-law, if she did what she ought, would do this and treat the old folks nice.

[521 522] The theme of strife between mother and daughter-in-law is one dear to the hearts of the countrymen. It appears very frequently in conversation and in jokes. If the family is to continue its existence, the introduction of the new woman must be effected smoothly. The whole moral force of the community as well as the interest of family harmony bear upon the two women. The fear of gossip in the neighborhood operates strongly to keep the young woman with her husband, and every family makes a strong attempt to hide its personal troubles as much as possible from the general knowledge of the community.

[626]

Nevertheless, stranger as the new woman may be, the norms of the community in ordinary cases demand that the young husband take the part of his wife. The bond between them is stronger than that between son and parent. As the quotation above shows, it is usually the mother who must leave. The country people deplore such an event, but they know that the son "has right" in so doing. Many statements of this attitude are to be heard among the small farmers and any examinations of cases of dispute which end in rupture show the attitude to be enforced in reality.

That this should be the case reflects the function of the marriage and matchmaking of the farm family. It provides for continuance.

592 888 The new position of the old couple and their desires in the altered situation which has seen their displacement ex-

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are not used but are inalienably associated with the family. This is a new development. In Carleton's day, before the famine, a daughter was often dowered with goods as well. Today this is not the case, for the goods like the land are part of an indivisible and corporate whole.

In this way, when we remember that the farm is identified in popular thinking with the patrilineal and patronymic family line of the landowner and that the girl is an outsider brought into that group, the money appears as a payment for the girl's inclusion. There is significantly no corresponding recompense or payment to the girl's father. He loses both daughter and dowry. The identification of his family, both immediate and ancestral, with the family farm is undisturbed. Of course the father of the girl makes sure that his prestige does not suffer. He demands that the farm she enters shall at least equal the dowry. The size of the dowry he gives his daughter is a very strong index of that prestige. It is both a duty and a great source of pride to provide well for her.

A further indication of the nature of the movement of the dowry is to be found in the terminological (formal) structure of the family which we have already described. It will be remembered that there was no integration between the boy's father and the girl's, and that relationship by affinity proceeded only from the point of view of the young couple. The two fathers-in-law or mothers-in-law are not felt to be related. No kinship terms express the new connection between them. Clearly, then, we have two patrilineal groups still unmerged, still distinct. That this is the case can be seen in Carleton's [1] descriptions of faction fights in which two families are often pitched against one another in spite of their alliance by marriage. The authors have seen some of them, not on the scale of faction fights, it is true,

[1] William Carleton, peasant novelist (1794–1869), principally *Tales and Sketches* (Dublin: J. Duffy, 1845) and *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* (10th complete ed.; London: W. Tegg, 1864).

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583 142 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY IN IRELAND
602 but ones in which brothers-in-law flared up to strike one another even though after a week or so the two connections became reconciled.

428 Up to this point we have failed to distinguish between
583 wills and marriage settlements in the statement of match-making and transfer of farms. The confusion is justified because in so many cases they are one and the same. Nevertheless, the subject of wills made apart from the son's marriage needs discussion. If our conclusions as to the nature of farm marriage are valid, something of the same play of changes, obligations, and goods must be present.

Money in the dowry functions to recompense the farmer for his relinquishment of the farm and the break-up of the family which he headed. Similarly, in the cases where inheritance proceeds without marriage, money plays the same role. There are many instances in which the old farmer has demanded payment for the property his heir is to receive. Let an Ennis solicitor describe his experience with one of them:

428 I remember an old fellow, Jimmy B — of K — who was taken
763 off dying to the County Home. He called for me to go out there and make a will for him. Seven wills I made for that old codger before he was through. He hadn't any idea of dying. He had only ten or fifteen acres of a farm, but he said he would give it to his son [only] if the son paid him ten pounds a year for it. They often do that, make the son pay from ten pounds to fifty pounds a year for the land. Then [when the solicitor pointed out that the son would inherit the money anyway as the old fellow had no other heirs], old Jimmy made me make another will leaving the money itself to the son.

Another case the authors knew involved no son. The old fellow left a small farm to his cousin and even though he was on the verge of dying, he forced the cousin to pay for it.

In still another instance, an old fellow had some land and about two hundred and fifty pounds to give away. He gave

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CHAPTER VIII

Dispersal and Emigration

THE internal reorganization of the family consequent on the marriage of one of their number produces a marked change in the situation of the as yet unprovided-for brothers and sisters. The other members of the family broken up by the marriage of one of their number on the home farm must be provided for elsewhere. They feel themselves entitled to portions, either in the form of dowries to marry into another farm or of some other means of establishing themselves. If such provisions in fact are not made, conflict arises, as we saw in the case of the McDermott murder. A classical case in the Ennis region of Clare was that of an old farmer of substance who married a nineteen-year-old girl when he was eighty. When the birth of a son precipitated a crisis, he had to be protected from his scandalized relatives, sons, and daughters by the police. When he died the following year, he gave a hundred pounds each to the constable who protected him and the priest "plucky enough to marry me." His sons refused to attend his funeral.

Normally, however, the transfer of land and the break-up of the family which worked it is made with the fullest possible provision for the other children. The dowry brought in is utilized to that end, and the savings of a lifetime on the farm have been used. The following observations made by a Land Commission official, himself a small farmer's son

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into the towns, into governmental, professional positions, and into the ranks of urban occupations must wait for special analysis in itself. It is not possible here to determine how great the effect of this movement from the small farms is upon the current much lamented overcrowding of the professions in Ireland. The point of interest for us is the dispersal of the farm group.

Naturally enough, this dispersal does not always occur so happily as in the above statement of the ideal. Yet the portioning off of the children and the success with which it is done is the pride as well as the duty of every farm family. A few examples will give the variations. They are more matters of success or failure to advance beyond the level of small farm life, but they show the genesis of the movement in the farm family. In a later section this subject will be dealt with in more detail. These examples, however, are typical, though the names are fictitious.

Leary of F —, a farmer with sixty acres, has a daughter married near-by with a four hundred pound fortune, and another, a nun in Mercy Convent, Ennis. Four sons have entered the priesthood, an expensive training from his point of view. A fifth is at home working, not yet thirty. Leary is a "strong" farmer, highly prosperous.

Tom Casey, K —, is a very poor holder with thirty acres of mountain and bog. Two sons and a daughter are still at home, and a bachelor brother works with him. Another daughter works for herself as a domestic servant in Ennis. One son Tom is apprenticed to a carpenter in Ennis. A daughter emigrated through the good graces of her aunt.

Michael Dunn of T — has twenty acres, but has not prospered. His two sons left at eighteen and twenty respectively to drive hackney automobiles in Ennis, an uncle there giving them a start. Another son now thirty and a daughter are still at home working the farm.

In a mountain townland, Pat Looney's father prospered, won the good graces of the landlord's agent, amassed four farms, the largest fifty acres, the smallest eighteen. He married off two 593 578 428

593 daughters with two hundred pound fortunes, settled three sons
578 and a daughter with her husband in each of the farms. Pat him-
428 self, the eldest, now about eighty, got the largest farm but not the one he wanted. He has been warring with his brothers and his neighbors ever since. He held out against his father for five years, refusing to marry and take his farm. In Pat's youth, land agitation and reform had not yet prevented subdivision and acquiring of new farms by a successful tenant. Pat on his fifty-acre mountain farm has married off a daughter locally at three hundred pounds and sent two sons out to America. Another daughter works in England. Two sons, aged forty-three and thirty-six, are at home and Pat hasn't made up his mind yet which one shall get the land.

593 The examples, various as they are, need not be multiplied.
167 The sons and daughter who are not to be portioned at home, in the words of the Luogh residents, "must travel." To that end both the savings of the family, created through their united efforts under the headship of father and mother, and
[533] the incoming dowry, are devoted. In Luogh there had been only four marriages in ten years; two of them were the usual farm-transferring matches, one a returned emigrant who married a boyhood sweetheart and bought a farm, and one a widower who took a second wife and a second fortune. An old woman described the situation: "There aren't any matches nowadays. Nobody has a fortune to give his daughter and the young men must travel." Yet the woman who
[454] lamented this state of affairs was carefully husbanding half crowns for her baby granddaughter's fortune.

593 Nevertheless this necessary dispersal of the members of
167 the family at its reorganization does not ordinarily destroy
457 the family ties. The bonds of affection and family obligation
434 still hold. If they have emigrated, the family members send back remittances and passage money for nephews and nieces and brothers and sisters left at home. A great many farms, especially in West and North Clare, are partially supported by Christmas gifts from Americans and other exiles. It is

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the old men would strip down and compete with one another to see who can do the most work. 888 521

Yet they were later forced to admit:

The people in the old times were not as knacky as they are now. Isn't it true that they used to have the horse in a stall feeding him while the man would be out with a spade turning over the garden?

Most of these allusions are to the realm of farm work. Just as the rivalry between father and son in the farm family is most intimate and most constant in the economy which they pursue together, so the expression of the conflict between the generations in the community at large takes the same form and finds its expression within the frame of the work that the community must do to live. 888 578 561

Naturally enough, the young people do not express these attitudes. They do not agree with their elders on the score of their own shortcomings. But they have a good deal to say, among themselves, from their own point of vantage. They express the reverse of the medal. The past is not so golden to them, and there are many among their elders whose idiosyncrasies can be sweepingly condemned with some such criticism as "old fool" and "old blatherer." Like the son already quoted who gave his father his head in farm work and listened patiently for orders, only to follow his own devices, they have their own valuations of themselves in which youth and strength outweigh age and wisdom.

But within a system of values in which the old represent the nexus of kinship and bear honor within the community, the young people do not see the issue so clearly. There is as much respect as there is antagonism in their verbal assessment of the older men and women. The young people recognize themselves as forming a distinct group with interests and sentiments of its own, opposed in the scheme of rural life to the elders. They use the word "we" and oppose it to "them" for the old. They recognize places, pursuits, 578 561

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578 561 and forms of activity as their own and find much more interest in them than in those of the other group. The young men greet the suggestion that they should take their place in the gathering of old men in something of the tone of derision which they reserve for women. But the rivalry in their sentiments between respect and egocentric feeling, like the controls imposed by their parents to keep them respectfully silent in the presence of their elders, imposes a silence upon them. Consequently, one cannot find among them the voluble expression of attitudes based upon one's belonging to a certain relative age. One must look for it rather in particular expressions of annoyance, boredom, and chafing against restraint.

Expressions of sentiment about age are the products of a system of values upon it in which the individual makes the valuation from the place he occupies. They express not only a grouping of individuals of similar age but a mutuality between groups so composed. And, too, they form a scaffolding of categorization in which each person takes his relative place.

561 554 551 888 Let us examine one instance at least of this categorization. The community in rural Ireland bestows many names and titles. They are ephemeral. They have no currency outside the immediate circle of life in the townland or village. At best, they spread through a parish. They are nicknames and express no more than the individual's particular place in the hearts of his fellows. Yet some of them are generic epithets. Like "old" and "young," they may prefix a name and designate the more closely the personality of the person named. Like "boy" and "old fellow," they may express broad categories of a man's age and its associated behavior, and may designate not so much a biologic or physiognomic reality as a sociological status. The words "saint" and *cailleach* are of the last kind of epithet, in rural usage. In the brogue they refer only to the old. In strict philology

boots of the bearers or else the type of barrow (of wood or straw) on which the coffin was borne, served to prevent the coffin from touching the soil. Again, in Ireland (at least, in parts of County Wexford), as in some European countries, wooden crosses or other memorials were left behind at such halts; in the Kilmore area of South Wexford, two crosses are carried with each funeral—one is left at the roadside at a halting-place, the other is set up on the grave. Cairns were often associated with funeral resting-places. It was customary in certain European countries for the bearers to partake of food and drink at resting-points; this, I am told, was the practice also in parts of Donegal and Waterford. Having rested for a while, fresh bearers took up the coffin, and the graveyard was ultimately reached. 764 [264]

I have already referred to the practice of laying down the coffin when a boundary-line was reached. My father, who died six years ago, at the age of 86, told me about a funeral-boundary custom in my native parish of Tuosist, in County Kerry, in the extreme southwest corner of Ireland. He was born in 1863 in the townland of Clogherane in Kerry, only a mile distant from the County Cork border. The high range of the Caha Mountains runs for over thirty miles through the peninsula of Béara, and separates at this point the Kerry parish of Tuosist from the Cork parish of Clanlawrence. During the Famine period of 1845–50 the men who lived at either side of the pass, Bealach Scairte, which led from one county (and parish) to the other, were employed, by way of a relief-scheme, in building a road across the pass. When the work ceased, the middle portion—about two miles in length—still remained undone. And so it remained until about twenty-five years ago, when, by the aid of State funds, the road now known as The Healy Pass was built across the mountain and the two ends were joined up. I often crossed by the old path from Kerry to Cork myself, before the new road was built; it was not so difficult in the early stage of the journey, but when the narrow defile (An Céim Cumhang) at the border was reached, one had to clamber as best one could over and between huge boulders which had fallen into the defile, some of them weighing forty or fifty tons, at a rough estimate. 764 491 [794]

Any funeral which now has occasion to pass from Cork to Kerry (or *vice versa*), can do so with the luxury of a hearse and motor-cars. But it was different when my father was a boy, and for long generations before that. He told me that one day, when he was on his way to the school at Glenmore—it was in the 1870's—he saw a large concourse of men, both young and old, passing along the old road at the foot of the mountain and through the fields. They were all carrying weapons or implements of some kind—some had hay-forks, he said, others had scythes, others hatchets, still others heavy sticks. He asked later on where they were going, and was told that they were going to meet a funeral, which was coming into Kerry from Cork, at the boundary-line. He told me that he knew well the Kerryman, who was leader of the large group; I knew him too, as he lived to a great age, and could speak no English. His name was Conchobhar Uaithne Ó Súilleabháin, and he lived at Shinnagh in the parish of Tuosist. My father told me that he heard later from some of those that were present at the boundary-line, that when the Corkmen appeared at the border, carrying the corpse tortuously on their shoulders, Conchobhar stepped in front of the bearers and stood with his stick raised on the large flat stone which marked the border at this point. The stone, by the way, is still known as Leac na gCorp (The Stone of the Corpses), and it is in the middle of the hollow which, avoiding the defile, was used by funerals, or by cattle 764 578 [191]

6: Ó Súilleabháin B-4, 5 (no date) 1956 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

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and sheep and horses being driven across to fairs at either side. The hollow is still named Eisc na gCorp (The Hollow of the Corpses), but travellers over the new road, which by-passed the hollow, cannot see it except they are told about it and search for it. To get back to my father's story: the Kerrymen, a hundred or more strong, had lined the boundary-line with their weapons ready for action and, as the Corkmen approached the flat stone, the Kerry leader ordered them to lay down the coffin on it.

"*Leagaidh síos annsan anois í! Ná téighidh a thuille!*"[1] he ordered, indicating the stone with his stick.

The Corkmen obeyed the order, and the Kerrymen then took the coffin on their shoulders and bore it down the mountainside into their own territory and along the six miles of road to the graveyard at Kilmackillogue. No fighting took place at the border-line on that day. But it was not always so on previous occasions. I heard the old people of the parish say that fights took place in former years when funerals crossed the boundary at Leac na gCorp, and that some of those engaged had been killed.

I know of three other boundary-lines where similar precautions were taken against those who carried the coffin to the border-line forcing their way across, while still carrying the remains. The first was at Glaise'n Fhineáin, a stream some miles to the west of Leac na gCorp, in the Béara peninsula, whose waters separate the counties of Cork and Kerry. The second was at Barrlinn, an old mountain road between counties Cork and Kerry, which ran southwards from Kilgarvan in the latter county to Bantry in the former; a cairn lies just beside the boundary-line where funerals halted and bearers were exchanged; fights are said to have taken place here in former times when funerals crossed the border. These two boundary-lines, as well as that described in more detail at Leac na gCorp, are all fairly close together, and all three are at the dividing-lines of parishes as well as counties. I have been told of still another boundary-line where fights took place on funeral days. This is the mountain pass known as Mullach Bhéal in the Dingle peninsula in Kerry, over which funerals passed in former times (before the Connor Hill road was built). These funerals were either on their way westwards from the parish of Clochán to some graveyard in the parishes to the west, or *vice versa*. Old people in that area tell of coffins even having been broken at this point during the attempt to force the boundary-line, and a large cairn marks the spot. Even when this old route was by-passed by the building of the Connor Hill road, and funerals followed the new route, the men from either side who assembled at the boundary insisted that the coffin be handed over to them at that point, and they carried it into their own parish.

[493] When carts replaced shoulder-bearers at a later date, the coffin had to be transferred from the cart which had carried it to the border to one from the other parish.

The reason given in more recent times for the insistence on the change of bearers being made at the border was that the men of the second parish (to which the funeral was going) did not wish it to be said by the men of the first parish that their assistance was needed to carry the coffin further; they were strong enough to bear the coffin into and through their own parish without any help from outsiders. This reason is hardly the main one, however, and is likely to have been put forward only when the original reason had been forgotten.

[1] "Lay it down there now! Don't go any further!"

In Tuosist the reason given to me by my father and some other old people was that ill-luck would fall upon Kerry and especially on the parish of Tuosist, if the Corkmen succeeded in forcing the coffin across Leac na gCorp and laid it down on Kerry soil. Sickness, bad crops, and misfortunes of many kinds would follow the corpse, if it were laid beyond the boundary-stone. This is undoubtedly the original reason for the defence of the border on funeral days. A corpse has in many lands for long been regarded as having evil magical power (known scientifically as *orenda* or *mana*) of an impersonal kind latent in itself. In Ireland, for example, fishermen regarded it as unlucky to take the corpse of a drowned person into a boat. Also, *an féar gorta* ("the hungry grass"), which grew wherever a corpse touched the earth, had the power of causing all those who walked over the spot to be stricken with abnormal hunger. Many other instances of the evil power of a corpse might be cited. Just two hundred years ago, Morty Óg O'Sullivan, a native chieftain of Béara in West Cork, who had fought against the British both in Ireland and in many European countries as a member of the "Wild Geese", was slain outside his own house near Eyeries in Béara. The British took his body to a warship at Bere Island and dragged it through the sea in the wake of the ship about sixty miles to Cork. A poet who described this happening wrote the couplet:

Ní raibh aon rath ar an uisce ó Chorcaigh go Béara
Ó tairngeadh tríd an bradán gléigeal.[1]

No fish were said to have since been caught in the sea-route through which the corpse was dragged.

In Sweden, Miss Louise Hagberg tells us, if a corpse were carried over cultivated ground or over lakes, they became thereby unfruitful, and crop-growing fields lost their vegetation. She also says that during the Middle Ages those persons over whose lands a corpse was carried unlawfully had the right to compensation; in Västergötland anybody who carried a corpse across the land of another, without the permission of the owner, rendered himself liable to a prescribed fine.

Thus, the funeral-boundary customs in the Cork-Kerry area, which have died out only in comparatively recent times, seem to fit into the wider pattern of custom and superstition devised to give protection against the magical evil power associated with corpses.

2. Wearing Clothes for the Dead

In the year 1918 or so, an uncle of mine died in the townland of Fehanagh, in the parish of Tuosist, in southwest Kerry. This is my native parish. Jerry Sullivan was my uncle's name; he died at the age of sixty-four. I was fifteen years old at the time, and was spending some weeks of my summer holidays at my uncle's when he became ill and died. I was allowed to remain in the house during the illness, wake, and funeral.

It is still the immemorial custom in that parish to get a suit of clothes specially made by a local tailor when a person dies. The suit is not worn by the corpse in the coffin. Still, it is intended

[1] There has been no luck on the water from Cork to Béara
Since the gleaming salmon was dragged through it.

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old as the Celtic sagas. The belief is spread, of course, far beyond Ireland. The Neapolitan fisherman paints his boat against the evil eye, the Balkan woman embroiders her petticoat to ward off evil and curses. The West African sorcerer knows the technique to perfection; our own Pennsylvania Dutch 'hexes' are modern practitioners. For the belief belongs to the infinite realm of magic.

If one were satisfied with the bald collector's statement, one would be content to leave the young man in such company. But by inquiring more deeply into the incident, one can look into the situation in which he suffered. If the belief can be seen at work in a situation which can be readily assessed, then it will serve better as a guide toward understanding the life in which it can still operate.

The situation has many elements. In the first place, the details of the young man's trouble are simple enough. In working a scythe round the bush-choked wall of a field, he fell in such a way as to drive a sliver of bush into his eye. We should call it, I suppose, a simple accident and pity him his bad luck.

But the small farmers among whom he lived wove another world of explanation round that eye. Gradually the tale unfolds. Perhaps the loss of the eye is a punishment. For the young man was not entirely blameless. An unvoiced suspicion had pointed his way.

For there had been a few weeks before what used

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754 to be called, in more heated days, 'an agrarian out-
578 rage'. Two old men, bachelors living alone, had
888 been fired upon in the night. Some one had pumped gunshot through the window of their poor cabin, high up the mountainside. As was probably intended, the shots buried themselves harmlessly in the cabin floor. But they awakened the old men, and frightened them badly.

The occurrence shocked the community. The two old men were harmless creatures; they were 'saints' in the country phrase. Who would want to injure them or drive them out?

The country-people had their suspicions; but the police could get nothing from them. There was nothing for the inspector to do but report another 'agrarian intimidation'. Even if he too knew, there was nothing to do; he could prove nothing without witnesses.

The country-people kept silence for good reason, from their point of view. If their suspicions were correct, the matter was a private affair, a family squabble. It was no business of theirs.

For the old men, by the standards of rural kinship, were not entirely blameless either. They held a farm they did not work. They took none of their kinsmen in. They should long ago have given up their land. One of them should have brought a girl in, married her and raised a family. They should have passed the land on to their sons, or failing sons, they should have brought in a nephew

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or other boy of their kindred. Then they could have turned the farm over to the boy, when they felt themselves too old, and let him marry, in order that their kindred's name continue and grow in land.

But the old men had never had a 'taste for marrying'. They were victims themselves of a too-intense loyalty. I say victims, because their loyalty had been narrowest of all. Their old mother had lived too long in her turn. She had never decided which one should get the land and bring in a girl. Perhaps their father might have decided, had he lived, but their mother survived him by many years. Neither of them wished to leave her side and neither would leave to make room for the other. When at last the mother died, the two bachelor sons were already old; they were long past marrying and set in celibate ways. They lingered on in an ever narrower round.

In the community they were 'saints', as I have said; they were 'no trouble to man or beast'. Yet, from another point of view, they were not doing the 'natural' thing; they made no provisions for their kinsmen; they did not pass on the land to those to whom by country right it should go. They refused to fill their proper roles in life. No wonder, then, that their cabin was a byword for neglect and disrepair. The countrymen would tell you, in a moralizing vein, it had become so 'for lack of a woman's hand'.

But to censure them for their misspent lives was

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626 no affair of the community's. The kindred of the
578 old men were the aggrieved parties. Their name
888 suffered and their sons were landless and unborn;
754 land belonging to them lay idle. So, whoever did the shooting—perhaps he had a reason for it. Suspicion might point here and there, but whatever measures the kinsmen might take to remedy their grievance concerned the kinsmen alone. Let those to whom the old men's duty lay see that they followed it. It was best to say nothing beyond one's immediate circle.

But the community could not entirely condone the shooting either. It was a bad thing, no good could come of it. To disturb the peace in such a way shook the security of them all; it gave the district 'a bad name'.

So, when a new event took place, the community found outlet for its censure. When the young man lost his eye, the community was ready for this reaffirmation of its threatened values. For the young man was one of the aggrieved kindred; he was a landless cousin's son; to him and his brothers the old men's farm should have gone. In the loss of his eye, the community felt he paid his penalty. No one knew just how it was inflicted; one does not attempt to unveil such mysteries. Their force is too great, too little controllable. Some felt the 'old man's curse' had done it, some felt that the priest might have done it, for the old men had appealed to him. Some blamed a vague mysterious power in the bush

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the young man cut. Whatever it was, the fact was plain. Only a week or so after the shooting, the young man lost his eye. His crime found a sure punishment in a realm in which all could agree without running risk of retaliation at the hands of the disputing parties.

I have couched this incident in vague, unprecise language for a reason. In the realm of folk-belief outlines are not clear and concepts are not precise. No one could formulate logically this retribution which put out the young man's eye. Nevertheless all felt it. And a moralist among them could sum up: "It is right to respect the old people".

The second example, then, points in the same direction as the first. Both 'west room' and the 'old man's curse' reflect age-old tradition. But both reveal a system of values which rules life in the present. That system of values dictates attitudes and reflects itself in behaviour. For example, neither the young man who may or may not have done the shooting, nor the old men who were shot at, were free agents. They both followed interests growing out of the values of rural life. Sometimes, as in this case, these interests conflict. If open fighting is not to tear life asunder, ways must be found to resolve the conflict, to find a formula of agreement, as the diplomats say.

I have tried in the last of my two examples to show you something of the movements of this sort and something of the agreement which can be

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476 keen over the dead. This conduct is reciprocal;
602 'friendliness' implies mutual obligation. One countryman gave me as his reason for going to the funeral of a second cousin: "I have right to go, they always come over to this side". When in Luogh a man's wife died and his sister took over the child, she did the 'friendly' thing that she 'had right to do'. In the very same terms a man 'made bold' upon his brother-in-law to lend him a son to help drive cattle to the fair, as the brother-in-law 'had right' to do.

In fact, failure to fulfil the pattern of conduct demanded by the obligations of 'friendliness' may bring punitive action on the part of the aggrieved kindred. We have seen this before in the story of the 'old man's curse' in the first lecture. In a part of Clare, not many miles from Luogh, a small farmer neglected his garden and forced his father-
[578] in-law to send up loads of potatoes for his wife's support. He was finally beaten up one night in his own house by his irate in-laws. Ordinarily, perhaps
[626] failure leads rather to an estrangement; it holds one up to general condemnation by the whole community. Persistence in failure leads to social death; the recluse is greeted by no one, not even his 'friends'.

574 But fulfilment entrenches one in social life. The
602 obligations extend to visiting and hospitality, the countryman's great virtue. 'A sup of tea' is 'put down before' the countryman who is travelling to

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he inherits, he is proud to be an able genealogist. Genealogy permeates his view of man and the world.

He judges himself and his contemporaries by their 'blood'. Like many another people, he makes a *deus ex machina* of this verbal identification. 'Good blood' explains success and high position; 'bad blood' failure and low estate. To insult a man it is enough to suggest he has 'tinker blood' or 'robber blood' in his veins. One damns thus a whole kindred by impugning its descent. Even such a socially undesirable state of affairs as a feud between two angry, warring kindreds can be given a name in accordance with this identification. It is said that 'there is bad blood between them'.

In fairy-tales and folklore the mystic force of common descent is stronger than fate and circumstance. The rightful son and brother, lost or stolen away, is finally restored to the heritage of his blood. For the 'blood' and the 'land' are identified as well. The social mind is not content with half-hearted inclusions. One's blood calls to one's possessions. A particular ancestral line is inseparable from a particular plot of earth. All others are 'strangers to the land'.

But there is, of course, a practical side too. We have seen it already in the account of agricultural co-operation, not, unfortunately, the kind A. E. and Sir Horace Plunkett advocated, but the pattern of centuries of local life. We shall learn more of it

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rest on things for the household and then come home with a few shillings to go into the common fund."

For the old couple are still very important within the family. Their years of command do not disappear overnight. The change must be handled smoothly. The happiest compromise is that one farmer of Inagh described: "Every morning, even after I was married, I would go to the old man and ask him what I should do for the day, and the old man would say it is now time to do this or that, or the cows should have something done for them, or the garden be prepared. I would go then and spend twenty-thirty minutes doing what the old man said, and then I would go do my own business."

The solution rural Ireland suggests to this problem is deference and respect. There can be no equality between the generations. In the words of one local sage, who could discuss the matter with the experience of a Dorothy Dix: "When the new woman is brought into the house, she may have modern ideas and be hoity-toity about the way to do things. So the old woman and the new woman wouldn't get along. The old man wouldn't say anything but he would light his pipe and go out till the squabble is over. It might get so bad that the old woman would get up and leave, and go live with her daughter some place. She could do this if the daughter's husband's mother were dead, even though the father might still be living in the house.

"But these squabbles are bad things. If the new

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182 593 888 578 woman would ask the old person her opinion on how to do this and that there never would be any trouble and the new wife could go ahead and do just as she pleased. Then the old woman would think she was doing it the way that she said. If the daughter-in-law did what she ought, she would do this and treat the old folks nice."

Deference and respect solve the problem, then, but if they do not, it is the older woman who must leave. That this should be the case reflects one great function of farm marriage. The son must cleave to his bride. If the worst comes to the worst, the new family may 'turn the old people out on the side of the road'. Terrible as such an ending would be, it is the necessary one. For the pattern of family and land must continue in the persons of the new man and woman and their children.

182 593 887 602 This desire is the binding force in the relations of all the household. It is as strong in the old people as in the new couple. The new balance of sentiments finds its expression in the inclusion of the children born to the young man and woman. Like so much of their behaviour, the country-people describe the new ties in terms of the 'help' they afford to the family corporation. And once again, naturally, an economic explanation is all too elliptical. A thoughtful farmer of Inagh generalized the matter in words which show the identity between help in farm work and social reciprocities: "When there are children in the house, the old

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182 is only the 'crabbit' person who will sell the land,
602 and 'go to town and drink the money'. Such con-
428 duct is indefensible, and for good reason. It runs counter to every law of kinship and local custom.

182 But in the case of a young widow, a conflict can
589 arise. The countryside recognizes only dimly, if at
428 all, the right of a woman to hold land in her own
593 person. That does not mean she cannot exercise full control and work the land herself, which she often does. Rather, she is regarded as holding it in trust for a brother or a son of her husband or her father. She cannot alienate it from the patrilineal line to which it belongs. The conflict arises because she herself moves between two such lines; her father's and her husband's.

Consequently, a widow remains upon the farm only if her children are growing up. If they are very young she returns to her father's farm, and a husband's brother takes over. If she is childless, she is hardly regarded as having moved out of her
[766] own kindred; she is buried, when she dies, not with her husband but with her father.

182 Even if she marries, she and her new husband
428 merely hold the land in trust. The second husband
587 and his children are 'strangers to the land'. The
593 rightful heir by blood, whose 'name' is on the
578 land, may turn them out. So strong is the identification. The woman gets the place only as a mother of the family's sons. One must remember that I am not speaking of formal title or legal right. They

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may be often quite different and run counter to rural values, breeding strife and forcing the aggrieved to seek redress outside the law.

Here, then, is the new equilibrium in the countryman's social life. The match provides a transition between the generations. Within the family unit, it provides for the establishment of a new nuclear group. It makes room for an essential continuity in which all the members may share and round which all their interests may be centred. Externally, it regathers those whom it must disperse. Round this dispersal, the web of kinship can be built. In the persons of the old people moved one step toward death, and in the identifications round them, 'descent' and 'blood' and 'the name on the land', the emotions of human groups can find their nexus.

In this movement, household, land, adult status, economic control, all move together. Marriage is a turning point round which rural life hinges. It is a structural centre. Every tie between human beings is modified. Then, in a new form, they can crystallize again—to give scope for movement, to allow continuities, to habituate human beings to new social places.

The whole of this movement takes place within a frame of human sentiments, ambitions and desires. Emotion lends its force. Convention, habit and the sanctions of public opinion and private anger keep the bounds and punish transgression. Public honour and self-satisfaction reward conformity.

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craftsmanship scattered in cabins here and there through the countryside. The mere memory of their trade may be all that still remains to them to tell one that they are not the petty cotters they seem to be. They have not married, or if they have, without a fortune to transmit, they can find no wives and husbands for their children. Or here and there the countryman will point out the shells of their houses; "The family all died out of it", he will explain.

For the pressure of social standing is a powerful force, even in such a setting. Rather than admit an inevitable decline into the status of a landless labourer, they must 'die out of it'. One's standing, we remember, is one's blood. If they cannot amass a tangible representation of that blood in the dowry, they cannot marry. Neither alliance nor continuance can be theirs.

Even if they do succeed, and merge by marriage into the farmers' commonality, they bear a trace of a different origin yet a while longer. Change is slow where lines are tightly drawn; even peasant society knows its parvenus. And if dispute and anger flare up to strip life to its essential core, what insults do we hear? The countryman 'throws up' to his fellow, not his face or his manners or his animal likeness, in a wild *chameau* or *schwein*, but his descent. He damns him with the reminder of 'carpenter' or 'weaver blood'.

Strange as this epithet may seem to us, it brings

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463 an adequate, instantaneous response. The psycho-
554 logist knows that expressions of anger, like any
578 other emotion, are conditioned within particular
social systems. And here the Irish system works, in its own fashion, to draw and to reinforce the inevitable distinctions and discriminations of social life.

From this fact springs comedy as well. Joke and
522 fun play round this central theme. A good deal of old custom and traditional pastime cluster here. The picturesque buffoonery of the 'strawboys' —privileged masqueraded figures whose mock-dangerous invasion of the wedding feast has been dignified to represent a last remnant of a primeval bride-capture—is better explained thus more simply. Such symbolism as the gaiety of Shrove Tuesday, when in Clare, at least, young men beat loudly on the doors of those unmarried women who took no husband through the Shrovetide, is still direct enough.

For comedy and laughter soften the sharpness of social controls. They are the velvet glove that clothes the iron hand.

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metrical. The shopkeeper, as creditor, has the whip-hand. As an urbanite, he has the superior status. Yet he is no less under obligation to his debtor.

Habit and sentiment weave amusing identifications round this social pattern. For example, to pay off a debt entirely is perforce to dissolve the relationship. It is to destroy the mutuality of expectations. If one's debt is paid off one loses, not only a customer, but a friend, quite literally. The ordinary small farmer would pay off all his debt only in a fit of anger. By so doing he would mean to break the tie completely and irrevocably. Consequently, he remains upon the shopkeeper's books indefinitely, paying off periodically bit by bit, but never working himself entirely clear. Should he do so, the shopkeeper would be fully warned. He would know his customer was about to carry his trade elsewhere, and to enter a new tie better suited to his desires.

But the shopkeeper is obligated, too, in his turn. He may not dun his customer heedlessly. To do so is to cast doubt upon the customer's ability or willingness, not to pay a money debt but to meet his obligation. It is in fact to call into question the social status which is his. If the shopkeeper errs in this nice tact, the debt is paid forthwith perhaps, but the relationship is broken.

Nor can he press even a just claim too far. He may often have to carry credit endlessly, in hope of better days. This is part of his obligation, and

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boycott awaits the offender or the usurper. To carry the claim to court is of no avail; one cannot these days foreclose on land in rural Ireland. Perhaps eventually he might win the farmer's holding from him, in satisfaction of his claim. But one must remember the farmer's 'name is on the land'. A whole kindred and the whole community with which the kindred is related become his bitter and dangerous enemies. In a familistic world that enmity endures for life and longer, even into the next generation.

If even then, in spite of this, the shopkeeper persists and grinds his debtor down, still another sanction closes in upon him. The countryman will make his last resort to age-old folk-belief. He will tell you, for instance, that the shopkeeper or publican dies out because the curses of men and women and the tears and prayers of broken families have wreaked a sure retribution. What better way indeed to express, in traditional mystical and quasi-religious terms, the force of social censure? The countryside can bring its whole traditional scheme of attitudes to bear upon the offender; it can justify the forces of social and personal action in the realm of the awesome mysteries of belief before which all must bow.

Thus one can see why, in folk-belief, money itself is evil. It is one of those mysterious powers which can bring, as though of its own awful and incomprehensible efficacy, both good and evil in its

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

town consists of streets of houses of peasant style strung end to end, picturesque with their washes of many colours, but perpetuating and even accentuating the filth which can be tolerated in a village setting of streams and fields but which becomes highly objectionable under urban conditions. On the other hand there are some spaciously-planned country towns which have an air of quiet opulence reminding one of the English heritage to which they owe their foundation. I am aware that in saying this I am ignoring the "inner flame" of the Irish towns, but it cannot be denied that externally they have much to learn from the older civic traditions of the sister isle. Dr. Arensberg has analysed the pattern of the country town and described it as "an extension townwards of the countryman's own social order." He shows that, until recent times, its economy has been that of distribution, not production. Banks and pubs and shops do most of the business and owing to the family system "Ireland is better supplied with shops, at least in number, than any comparable European nation." If we exclude the Lough Neagh basin, all the denser areas of population are coastal and most of the country's manufacturing industries are concentrated in the ports (Fig. 108).

To return to the fair, we have tried to show how the periodic gatherings in which they originated were associated with ritual and emotional experiences connected with the celebration of recurring events such as seed-time and harvest. Breaking the routine of toil, it is characteristic that much licence was permitted on these occasions. Until recent times a strong spirit of revelry and a temporary slackening of the moral code distinguished the great Irish fairs. Even to-day the police or civic guards make allowances for fair day and turn a blind eye to many offences against the law: it is recognized as a time of special licence. Games, dancing and faction fights were the order of the day once the buying and selling were over. Until a generation ago cruel "knuckle-dusters" (Fig. 109) were carried in readiness, and the countryman's heavy felt hat was worn as a defence against the blackthorn shillelagh.

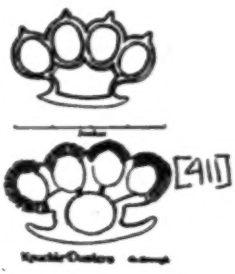

Fig. 109.

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

blackthorn shillelagh. Trailing the long coat or "trusty" was a recognized invitation for a fight.

To the onlooker it appears as though the business of selling is itself in the nature of a fight, such are the hearty and resounding slappings of open hands up and down the street. Then follows the prolonged argument, the cut and thrust of keen bargainers in a circle of interested onlookers, over the amount of "luck money" to be given back to the seller. It is an age-old ritual far removed from the mechanical sale of a pen of cattle at an auction. The establishment of auction sales and latterly of marketing boards not only undermines the business of the country town, but threatens to destroy the intricate fabric which binds together a thousand homesteads in the intercourse of fair day. It is a sad commentary on rural development that in recent years "dole-days" have brought as many people to town as "fair-days."

Fig. 110. Fair Day.
A bargain is being struck on the left.

10: Browne D-5 (1893) 1894
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

Begging is practically unknown, and drunkenness, as a habit, does not exist, the sobriety being very noticeable on holidays, though occasional bouts of drinking are sometimes indulged in when a good take of fish has been made. They are very conscientious in their religious observances, and depend greatly on the advice and control of their clergy, with regard to temporal as well as spiritual affairs. Sexual irregularities are extremely rare, no case of illegitimacy having been recorded from the islands for years.

As fishermen they are brave, hardy, and extremely venturesome; this applies especially to the men of Inishshark, who are reputed in Bofin to be the best and most daring boatmen on the west coast.

Quarrels often occur, but a regular stand-up fight appears to be unknown, the men usually contenting themselves with abusive language, or at most a sudden blow or stone-throwing. A woman when angered may use very abusive language towards a man, as she would be practically safe from any fear of physical violence on his part, even when she was very provoking.

On the other hand, they are not without faults. In their ordinary life they are thriftless, and not too cleanly in many of their habits, and have but little regard for ordinary sanitary laws; their veracity, too, is not altogether unimpeachable, while the people of the mainland allege that they have a very strong aversion to the payment of debts, rent, and cess, for the last-named of which they owe over £1300.

The habits and manners of the people of Shark are much the same as those described above. The people are noted for their loyalty to one another; they never tell any stranger anything about their local affairs. They are kindly and civil to visitors, always crowding down to assist them on landing, but are said to be capable of acts of ferocity when roused.

5. *Folk-names.*—The following list of fifty-one surnames comprises all those now to be met with on the islands. Some of these names, however, are those of families not long established on the islands, while others, formerly common, as Gorham and Halligan, are now without representatives.

The Gorhams are still, to some extent, connected with Inishbofin, as one of them is proprietor of the only shop there worth the name, and in addition holds a farm, but he lives on the mainland, and manages them by deputy, only occasionally visiting the place himself. It is possible that, owing to the heavy emigration, other surnames may also have disappeared. In the list of surnames given in the

11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Kilmore

mentions that at one time the people of Inishkea were much noted for it, and that the fate of the two men, who some time in the last century ruined themselves in a lawsuit about a sheep, became proverbial, and litigants were warned to remember the fate of "Malley and Malone." C. O.[1] also refers to this peculiarity, which nowadays seems to be more characteristic of the mainland people than the islanders.

In the course of the cases arising from this tendency, many curious examples of ingenious cross-swearing occur. Intoxication is rather prevalent on fair days and holidays, and at weddings and other festive occasions, but at ordinary times there is not much of it among the country people. They appear to be conscientious in their religious observances, and depend much on the guidance and advice of their clergy.

As will be judged from the extent and variety of their folk-lore, they have a great love for the supernatural and mystical.

As regards morals, though illegitimacy is by no means unknown, yet, when the size of the population is taken into account, it is so rare as to be very creditable to the moral tone of the people.[2]

A stand-up fight rarely occurs when men quarrel, there may be one or two blows struck, or stone-throwing may be indulged in, but disputes do not usually get beyond cursing and vituperation.

As parents they are affectionate, but careless and unequal in their treatment of their children, at one time over indulging them, and at another punishing severely for a slight fault.

With regard to industry, but little can be said in their favour, though energetic by starts, during which they are capable of a great deal of work, accounts agree in stating that they dislike steady occupation, and are indolent. It should be remembered, however, that there has hitherto been but little inducement to them to cultivate steady industry. The women seem always to have plenty of work on hand, and to do it.

In this district, as in many others, the people are not very careful in their re-payment of debts, and shopkeepers do not now give credit to the same extent as formerly. As to rent and cess, to the payment of these, too, a strong aversion is often manifested.

Many of their habits are not over cleanly, though this is largely due to the wretched nature of their houses, and a strict regard for truth is not a prominent part of their character.

[1] "Sketches in Erris and Tyrawley."

[2] The total number of cases which occurred between the years 1884 and 1893 was 18.

12: Freeman K-5 (1954) 1958
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

[p. 202(B)]

121 IRELAND'S decline in population has been made possible by the [167] availability of work elsewhere for her people. This article deals with one of the poorest and most isolated districts of the country, an island off the [434] west coast which, for over 60 years, has received government help in various forms, as well as money from relations in America and in Britain. And the [794] island, Inishbofin, has a reasonably contented community not untypical of many in the west of Ireland, all of them Roman Catholic in religion and depending on the priest for the main leadership. Emigration continues, but those left behind and those who return to the island have a leisured way of

*The material for this paper was partly collected during a visit with the Geographical 114 Society of Ireland in July, 1954. The author visited about half the houses on the island of 124 Inishbofin, and for one-quarter of the 96 households recorded the numbers of the household, information on those who had emigrated, the area of the farm, number of stock, methods of selling produce, and other sources of income, such as fishing or work on the roads. Within this range the answers were generally reliable, but no direct financial inquiry would be fruitful and on Inishbofin the number of sheep was [578] almost invariably understated as there are jealousies between households about the use of commonage (see p. 205). In one case a farmer [231] told the writer that he had "half-a-dozen sheep or so" but the following morning he had 23 lined up in his field for the dealer to see. It was impossible to resist the comment over the garden wall, "A fine lot of sheep this morning."

[113] Other aspects of Inishbofin are discussed in three articles in *Irish Geography*, Vol. 3, 1956, pp. 123–135, by J. P. Haughton, T. Jones Hughes, and J. A. K. Grahame.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

FROM FOREST TO FARMLAND

Little attention has been given to the Irish openfield system.[1] It has escaped the notice of historians because the revolution which broke it down was a prolonged and silent one, involving no Enclosure Acts such as those which record the disappearance of the English openfields. Under the Irish system it was the practice, in some areas at least, for the plots to change hands periodically among co-partners by the casting of lots. Thus the transition to consolidated holdings was easier than under the English system, where the scattered plough strips were apparently permanently held. It is important to examine the openfield system more closely than might seem to be warranted by its almost complete disappearance from the modern scene, because it was against this background that many of the tools and customs we shall discuss were evolved. Just as in lowland England the English village was inseparable from its openfields, so in Ireland hamlets or 'clachans' accompanied the old form of land utilization. They will crop up again and again in the chapters which follow. But today and for the last century or so the isolated farm has characterized the Irish rural scene (Fig. 4). From some elevated viewpoint in the mountainy parts one may count hundreds of small whitewashed homesteads dotted among the fields, each nestling behind a handful of wind-bent trees and approached by its own access-road—the loaning or borheen beloved of the sentimental song writers. Every farmstead has the air of a fortress, an independent unit within its jealously guarded boundary fences, defended by a heavy iron gate hung between stout stone gate-pillars (Fig. 5) and claiming rights of way whose protection keeps the town solicitors profitably engaged. The degree of independence has been notably strengthened by the Land Acts (1869–1925) under which former tenants have become their own landlords. Peasant-proprietorship is an established fact throughout the country, though it has by no means solved Ireland's problems as some politician-prophets claimed it would.

The truth is that, taking the country as a whole, most of the farms are too small to be truly independent of their neighbours. Bitter experience and the traditional land-hunger of a community

[1] E. E. Evans, *Geography*, 24 (1939), 24–36; D. McCourt, *Economic History Review*, 7, 369–76.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

where the land has been almost the sole available resource go far to explain the jealousy with which established rights are maintained, but there are deeper needs and bonds in the rural community.

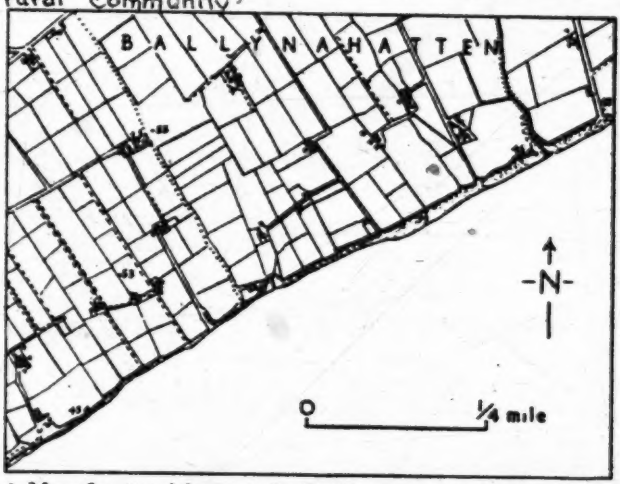

FIG. 4. Map of scattered farms on the Co. Down coast, showing seaweed-roads. (Based upon the Ordnance map with the sanction of the Controller, H.M.S.O.)

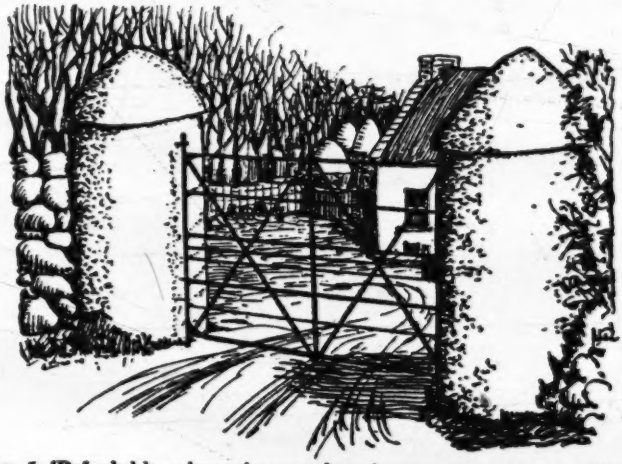

FIG. 5. 'Defended by a heavy iron gate hung between stout stone gate-pillars:' an Ulster farm.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

These clachans, while some had their speciality such as weaving or thatching, were concerned primarily and almost exclusively with agriculture and attracted none of the elements of the true village, whether church, inn or shops. Itinerant 'tinkers and tailors' paid periodic visits and with the pedlars and beggars brought news of other districts, but the economic and social needs of the hamlet were met by periodic visits to the fairs and by seasonal gatherings of various kinds. Within the group the bonds of kinship were close and strong, and ties of marriage carrying reciprocal responsibilities linked one clachan with another within small neighbourhood units consisting of perhaps half a dozen townlands. With the close kinship bonds went corresponding rivalries with adjacent neighbourhoods which provided social motive force by acting as incentives. These rivalries broke out characteristically into feuds and blood-letting at fairs and gatherings. But in later days, at any rate, internal rivalries and squabbles were more conspicuous and found more opportunities within overgrown kinship groups which had become too complicated to function smoothly. A few illustrations will suffice.

One visitor explained the presence of the back-doors on clustered houses, for which we shall offer other explanations in the following chapter, by the fact that the women needed an escape when too hotly engaged in rows with neighbours.[1] Joint ownership sometimes extended to single animals with strange results. For example: 'three men were concerned in one horse; but the poor brute was rendered useless, as the unfortunate foot of the supernumerary leg remained unshod . . . and accordingly it became quite lame.[2] We are reminded of the difficulties arising from the joint ownership of fruit trees in some Mediterranean countries. It was in Donegal too that I heard of a ram which died of exposure when it was part-shorn by one of its joint owners. In the same district a man wishing to build a wall around one of his fields but unable to get his neighbour to agree, deliberately erected it a yard or two on his own side of the boundary so that the neighbour would still be forced to herd or tether his cow to prevent it trespassing on the

[1]Isaac Weld, *Statistical Survey of Roscommon* (1832), 475.
[2]Lord George Hill, *Gweedore*, 23.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

narrow strip between the boundary and the wall. 'Fights, trespasses, confusion, disputes and assaults, were the natural and unavoidable consequences of the rundale system.'[1] On the other hand we must recall the extreme reluctance with which the system was at last abandoned, the social benefits it conferred on members of the kin. The reforming landlord, Lord George Hill, comments that 'the pleasure the people feel in assembling and chatting together, made them consider the removal of the houses, from the clusters or hamlets in which they were generally built to the separate farms, a great grievance.'[2] Another writer gives as the basis of the tenants' grievance, 'the recollection of nights of social concourse, of aid in sickness, of sympathy in joy and sorrow, of combined operations of defence against bailiff or gauger'.[3] There were ceilidhes and spinning parties, and many a clachan had its shanachie (story-teller) and its fiddler or piper—usually a maimed or simple person—who accompanied with folk-tunes. Folk-songs, occupational airs and legendary tales were kept alive in this way. Apart from the co-operation implicit in the openfield system there was a good deal of sharing in other ways. Thus there would be a communal corn-kiln for drying the grain before grinding, a knocking stone for pounding barley, and in some districts a corbelled stone sweat-house which took the place of the village doctor in treating rheumatic pains.

The openfield which lay around the cluster, normally on the down-hill side so that the vital manure could be 'sliped' down-slope (see Chapter XIII), seems to have been kept in cultivation in some areas at least year after year. This was the infield, in contrast to the outfield, the outlying rough pasture bits of which were temporarily reclaimed and then left to rest for long periods. We shall return to the plough and spade and methods of cultivation in another place but may refer here to the allotment of the holdings in the common fields. Although in many parts of the country the holdings, by the end of the eighteenth century, had become fixed in their scattered parcels on the several qualities of land in the openfield, there is abundant

[1] Lord George Hill, *Gweedore*, 22.
[2] ibid., 42.
[3] W. R. Wilde, *Dublin University Magazine*, 41 (1853), 20.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

222 minutely fragmented appearance of land held in rundale. Rights
387 of access, by narrow lanes between the beds, were often dis-
423 puted, and there were occasions for fights when as many as a
hundred carts from forty townlands might converge on Mill Bay
● [578] at low tide. I first heard of the seaweed beds from an Air Force pilot who brought me air photographs of what he thought was submerged farmland: the little rectangular fields of Mourne seemed to march out beneath the sea.[1] In fact they were necessary adjuncts to the arable land, and the rents of up to twenty pounds an acre were often higher than those paid for the fields of coarse sand and gravel which the wrack enriched. An auctioneer told me he had sold a wrackbed of one Irish acre for
[435] £145 not many years ago. Nearly all of the several hundred farmers who had wrack rights here held two or three beds, and each man's plans were scattered so that he had different kinds of weed growing on them: 'knob wrack' close inshore, then 'bladder wrack' and farther out still the 'lazy wrack' whose fronds are submerged at high water even at neaps and which therefore grows faster than the other species.

222 The crop was harvested with knives and sickles between March and June, the bare-footed reapers at the same time lifting, turning and re-setting the heavy boulders which tend to get buried in the sand. Carts too are liable to sink, and when the going is too soft the weed is rafted ashore. It is allowed to float on the incoming tide and a boat dragging a rope pulls the
[501] load together and tows it ashore. Very large rafts, secured by a rope of seaweed, used to be floated ashore on the tide in Mayo. Patrick Knight, describing Ballycroy about 1830, observed that the steersman, armed with a pole, might be seen 'sitting on the heap, roasting his potatoes and shellfish'.[2]

222 The great bulk of the wrack taken all round the coast for
423 manure was driftweed thrown up during storms, but the supply was often supplemented by cutting or pulling weed from the rocks, and in some places there were complicated methods of regulating and distributing the harvest. On a stretch of coast familiar to me in south Down one can pick out strips running out into the sea, demarcated by marked boulders. They were

[1] E. E. Evans, *Mourne Country*, ch. 15.
[2] P. Knight, *Erris in the Irish Highlands*, 99.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

223 Faeroe Islands[1] were practised in a region which has so many culture parallels with the northern isles.

225 Down to recent times coast-dwellers also took their toll of seals and porpoises. 'We thought more of a seal in those days', wrote Thomas O'Crohan of the Blaskets, 'than of the very best pig.'[2] They were valued too for their skins, which as we have mentioned made covers for the curraghs and shoes for the rock-climbers. Seal hunting was dangerous work, sometimes in- [481] volving swimming into the underwater caves where they breed. [292] The seal catchers in County Cork wore 'bags quilted with charcoal' on their arms, for the animals let go their hold when they bit on the crunching charcoal.[3] In the Blaskets porpoises were slaughtered after being driven ashore by boats, and then 'everyone was crimson with the blood of the sea-pigs'.[4] The [251] meat was salted down.

226 Crabs and lobsters, like so many other seafoods, are now neglected and even despised, though there are commercial [228] fisheries in areas accessible to markets. Apart from creel fishing they were formerly taken from the rock holes where they lie, either by hand or with an iron hook. In County Kerry one man would hold another under the water with an oar while he [481] searched the holes. The old-style pots or creels are circular, [227] with a flat weighted bottom, sometimes hinged: the principle rods are of hazel or even whin, the woven sides of sally, laurel or heather stems. They vary in pattern from one district to another, as do the round-topped rectangular net-creels which have taken their place almost everywhere (Fig. 76). The lobstermen are a hardy breed, many of them having turned [578] from long-line fishing, and they have kept up the feuds and rivalries to which the long-liners were addicted. In both types of fishing the search for bait is an exacting occupation. I illustrate a special fork used for digging lug worms, and also a mussel rake (Fig. 74).

222 674 If it is difficult to obtain information about the history of such tools and activities as these, which have been the concern

[1] K. Williamson, *The Atlantic Islands*, ch. 6. [Text continues on p. 232]
[2] T. O'Crohan, *The Islandman*, 99.
[3] E. Wakefield, *An Account of Ireland*, 2, 127.
[4] T. O'Crohan, op. cit., 12.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

upon hills', which the Dublin government found so obnoxious in the sixteenth century, the persistent efforts of the Irish to maintain their ancient rights and customs of public assembly. In the Anglo-Norman period and again during the plantations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries towns were deliberately established with the intention of bringing 'civilized ways of living to the wild Irish'. Many of them are characterized by a wide street or square—the 'diamond' in Northern Ireland—where fairs and other gatherings could be dominated and controlled from a castle which overlooked it. These urban settlements were known to the Irish, whose native 'towns' were rarely anything more than disorderly clachans, as 'street towns'. They are found scattered at fairly regular intervals all through the countryside, usually at some river crossing or hill gap where routeways meet. Some of them, well-placed in good fertile country, have expanded, while others have decayed or remained mere villages. Often one will find not far away the old Fair Hill from which the fair was attracted as the facilities of the town outweighed the traditional pull of the inconvenient hill-top. But for long the Irish kept to their own fairs which continued, according to an Act of 1431, to 'take great customs and profits to the depression of the boroughs and the trading towns'.[1] The old assembly places are not entirely forgotten, and it often happened that they were visited for games and horse-racing long after they had lost their function as places of commerce. They are celebrated in local ballads and their sites can still be traced by the grassy mounds which are the remains of booths and cattle pens. The lost fairs of Ireland deserve a study such as is being made of the lost villages of England, but the chief sources for such a study, in the absence of records, must lie in field work and the fast-fading memories of the countryside.

The fairs were formerly organized in a recognized sequence of goods and livestock, terminating in sports and horse-racing—and not infrequently in bloodshed. Several of them achieved a notoriety which made their names a byword, and among them none was more notorious, owing partly no doubt to its proximity to Dublin, than Donnybrook Fair. The Parliamentary Gazetteer of 1845 forgets its sober purpose in thus describing

[1] T. W. Freeman, *Ireland*, 95.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

443 it: 'During the week, beginning on the 26th August, is held
543 the notorious Donnybrook Fair, professedly for the sale of
578 horses and black cattle, but really for vulgar dissipation, and
786 formerly for criminal outrage and the most revolting debauchery. It was for generations a perfect prodigy of moral horrors —a concentration of disgrace upon, not Ireland alone, but civilized Europe. It far surpassed all other fairs in the multitude and grossness of its disgusting incidents of vice; and, in general, it exhibited such continuous scenes of riot, bloodshed, debauchery and brutality, as only the coarsest taste and the most hardened heart could witness without painful emotion.' This was by day; 'the orgies of the night may be better imagined than described'. An anonymous writer is quoted as saying: 'We venture to say that there is more misery and madness, devilment and debauchery, than could be found crowded into an equal space of ground in any other part of this our globe, during five times the same space, which is spent at Donnybrook, in one given year'. The *Gazetteer* then recovers itself and offers excuses for 'describing what ought never to have been described'. One regrets rather that the compiler was so overcome by horror as to forget his statistical duties.

543 The absence of moral restraint which led to extremes of
527 lawlessness at Donnybrook and elsewhere was a normal and
443 characteristic accompaniment of these periodic folk-gatherings.
[786] Such moral holidays are a feature of many societies which have not been greatly influenced by urban ways and values. Their purpose appears to be cathartic, but that there is a lingering fertility magic underlying the excitement is suggested by such strange rituals as those which mark the 'Puck Fair and Pattern' of Kilorglin at the head of Dingle Bay in Co. Kerry. The fair is unfortunately not mentioned in the *Parliamentary Gazetteer*, though the village of Kilorglin is described as 'an unprosperous, sequestered, and almost squalid seat of population; and appears to have acquired marvellously little profit from the advantageousness of its position for both inland and seaward trade'. Puck Fair, held every August, is the great event of the year in West Kerry, and lasts three days. 10th August is 'Gathering Day', the 11th is 'Fair Day', and the 12th 'Scattering Day', terms which have no doubt been handed down from days when

443 One may readily see how this came about, for these were the
437 times when the stock was gathered and sorted, and dues were paid to the overlords in cattle. In the ordinary business of the fair exchange and barter gave way in time to money transactions, but one has only to visit a cattle fair to sense that the noisy ritual of assessing values and the prolonged bargaining have come down from a time before the use of money was general. The vigorous hand-slapping by which bargains
[201] are sealed in tight-lipped silence could derive from the days when different languages were spoken at the fairs. Apart from the difference between English and Gaelic it should be remembered that in many districts pockets of non-Gaelic speech, perhaps even of non-Aryan tongues, survived well into the Christian era. Another interesting accompaniment of the con-
[777] cluded bargain is the piece of money, the luck penny, which the seller hands back to the purchaser as a gesture of independence when a price has finally been agreed on. Many a fight
●[578] has begun because a buyer has been dissatisfied with the amount of his luck money. Similar bargaining took place when a servant was being hired for the half year, and he received his earles or earnest money as a sign that the contract was concluded, handing over to his employer his bundle of clothes in return.

543 The countryman will find any excuse for going to the fair,
[805] and it is his proud boast that he has seen so many fairs. It is by the fairs, and not by the calendar, that he measures time and dates important events in the life of the community. 'Their whole thought seems to be going to fairs and selling or exchanging', it was written of the Mayo peasantry in 1836,[1] and in the seventeenth century we find this comment on 'the inferior rank of husbandmen' in Westmeath: '(they) are very crafty and subtile in all manner of bargaining, especially in their dealings in fairs and markets'.[2] Your luck at the fair might depend
777 on the colour of the hair of the first person you met on the road,
543 and it was unlucky to be passed on the way, so that horsemen riding at full gallop were not merely trying out their paces for the races which followed. For good luck you should carry with

[1] P. Knight, *Erris in the Irish Highlands*, 104.
[2] Sir Henry Piers, *West-Meath*, 115.

1 [ie, the seasons and rent days 260 dating from 1 May and 1 November. — Analyst]

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

them have had to be suppressed: they became occasions of lawlessness and bloodshed. Like the fairs they drew their adherents from several rival neighbourhoods and therefore brought feuding clans together. The following is a typical comment of the early nineteenth century: 'On these patron days, which

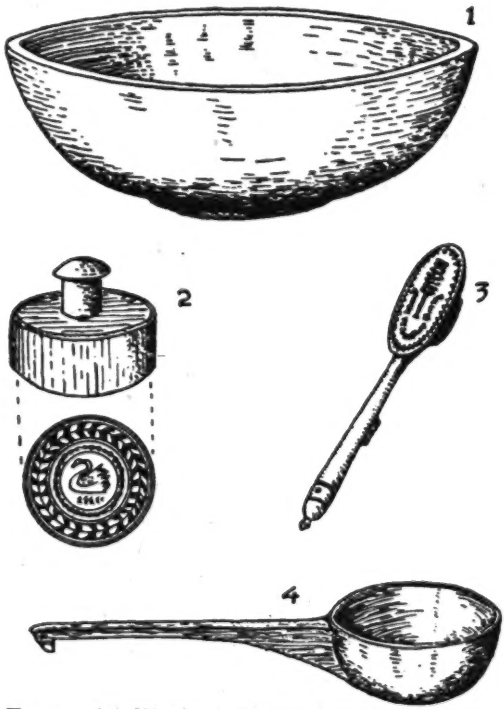

FIG. 88. Turnery. (1) Wooden bowl, Co. Armagh. (2) Butter stamp, Co Fermanagh. (3) Butter stamp, Co. Antrim. (4) Ladle, Co. Antrim.

generally fall out on Sundays, great numbers of young persons of both sexes assemble, tents are erected, music, dancing, drinking and every kind of excess takes place, and the revel not infrequently terminates in battery and bloodshed, from the contention of adverse factions'.[1] Sir William Wilde's description

[1] W. Shaw Mason, *Parochial Survey*, 3, 245 (of Listerling, Co. Kilkenny).

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

of the Pattern of Glendalough in Co. Wicklow was written later in the century. The fights would begin early on the eve of the patron's day, on 23rd June; 'the scene was remarkable, an immense crowd had bivouacked among the ruins (of the seven churches of Glendalough) and were cooking their evening meal, gipsy-wise, throughout the space of the sacred enclosure. Dancing, drinking, thimble-rigging, prick-o'-the-loop and other amusements continued even while the bare-headed venerable pilgrims and bare-kneed voteens were going their prescribed rounds. Towards evening the fun became fast and furious . . . the crowd thickened, sticks were brandished and the faction fight began. It was an unsafe locality unless a stipendiary magistrate and about 100 police could keep the combatants, the Byrnes, Tools and Farrells, etc., separate'.[1]

Some of the most notorious patterns were connected with holy wells named after a saint but not necessarily located near an old church site. Reading the accounts of witnesses in the early nineteenth century it is hard to believe that religious devotion could be associated with such profanity, but granting that social conditions in the decades before the great famine must have contributed to scenes which the church itself described as 'drunkenness and debauchery', there was, as with the wakes for the dead, a vestige of innocent paganism in the rituals. Some patterns survived their banning by the church and have persisted, stripped of their grosser elements, to this day. The celebrated wells of St. Patrick at Struell in Co. Down, which are still visited by a few pilgrims on St. John's Eve, were the scene of the gathering of great crowds of people and of strange rites until a few years ago. Here as often happened the chief celebration was on the Eve of the Feast of St. John the Baptist and not on the patron saint's day, so that it was not strictly a pattern. Another Midsummer gathering which has often been described is that of St. Ronogue's Well near Cork, which has changed beyond recognition since Mrs. Hall, in 1824, described it as an assembly of 'the worthless and dissipated of the whole county. To the superstitious rites of the morning succeeded the saturnalia of the evening;—the having drunk of the water being considered as a licence for every sort of debauchery . . .

[1]Sir William Wilde, *J.R.S.A.I.* (1873), 449.

14: Westropp B-4, 5 (no date)1910-12
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County Clare

COLLECTANEA.

A Folklore Survey of County Clare (*continued from p.* 60).

XII. *Lucky and Unlucky Deeds.*

It is unlucky to see the new moon through glass; to throw dust or slops out of a house on New Year's Day, as you throw away with them all the good luck of the year; to throw dust or slops towards a neighbouring "fort";[1] to see one magpie, or a "weazel" (stoat), without saluting it by bowing or taking off your hat; to go out of a house where they are churning without "putting your hand to the churn," *i.e.* giving a few strokes with the churn "dash," so that you will not "take" the butter; and to take fire out of a house,—so that, if you light a pipe indoors, it should be smoked out before leaving. Iron and pins,—except crooked pins with the points towards you,—should be picked up, and the first thrown over the left shoulder. Rub your hand on wood if it itches or after a boastful speech or speaking too confidently of the future; in east Clare you touch wood twice, with the phrase, "Good word (*or* time) be it spoken," after an imprudent expression.[2] You should bow to the new moon. Turn your money for luck after seeing the new moon. On visiting a friend in a new house, you should give some present, however small. In east Clare some persons are careful to throw a hen or other fowl that has died of disease over the fence on to their neighbour's land, to remove the ill-luck from their own poultry.[3] Others will not wash eggs offered for sale, as it stops

[1] So Dr. Macnamara and others.

[2] "Scratch it in wood, and it will come good," says a rhyme.

[3] Practised near Tulla, and resulting in some cases in great ill-will.

[577] [825] [574] [578]
[p. 224]

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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Implicit in these statistics are such Irish phenomena as monogamy, the predominance of the nuclear family (Only 10.3 percent are extended in Inis Beag.), family exogamy, patrilocal residence, and a high incidence of celibacy. The last listed bachelor who lives with his widowed sister-in-law, and frequently is visited by a brother's adolescent grandson from the mainland, is regarded by many bachelors as fortunate—"He has a woman and a boy to work and no 'responsibilities.'"

Inheritance in the island is patrilineal, and before a man can marry, his father or widowed mother must "pass on" the property to him. To encourage aged men to surrender ownership of their land, a statute forbids their receiving the old age at 70 years until they have so acted. But despite this law, six Inis Beag elders aged 70 to 79 years—with a total of seven bachelor sons ranging in age from 32 to 47 years (not counting eight others who have emigrated but are eligible to inherit)—still maintain ownership themselves. When a man is without sons, he most commonly wills the land to a brother's son or arranges to have a man wed his daughter and "marry in" to the household. An in-marrying son-in-law, it is interesting to note, may pay a bride wealth, which usually is much larger than the dowry of the girl, for he has no land of his own. Among contemporary landholders, five have obtained property from uncles, six from widowed mothers, and two by marrying in. Other land in Inis Beag has been procured through purchase, exchange, gift–giving, and land dispute verdicts.

A major cause of celibacy, late marriage, disputes, and emigration related to the system of inheritance, seldom mentioned either in writings about Inis Beag or by the islanders, is the common practice of a father playing off his sons against one another for the patrimony in order to achieve favored treatment for his wife and himself in their waning years. Elders are well treated, in part as a result of the above and in part out of the fear that after death their ghosts will punish those who have maltreated them. Often the playing off of sons for the patrimony leads to factionalism within the family and may provoke a secretly favored son to emigrate or, more seriously, all sons acting in concert to depart in anger and disgust. Today, a total of 22 married men, widowers, and widows whose average age is 65.7, hold land that is inheritable by a total of 56 sons whose average age is 30.1 years. (The 16 elders who have a total of 20 sons in the island average 66.7 years of age and their offspring 33.6.) The uncertainty about which sibling will inherit is reflected in these figures: of the 59 present landholders, 47 percent are first born, 42 percent second, 8 percent third, and 3 percent fourth and beyond.

Although the Inis Beag family is totally exogamous, the village is only 78.3 percent exogamous (The range for the four villages is from 75 to 83 percent.). Since 1911, six women have married men, mostly farmers, living in communities along the neighboring coast and only one an Inis Thiar islander, while four mainland and five Inis Thiar women have wed men from Inis Beag. During this same 50 year period, six local men have married into contiguous mainland settlements and one into Inis Thiar, but no men from the outside have married into the island. As we have noted already, immigrants for two or three generations are regarded as strangers by the folk, and the same is true of in-marrying wives; these women are treated aloofly and are the victims of much spiteful gossip. Many female siblings marry locally rather than emigrate—one case of four sisters, five of

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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581 Marriage figures prominently as a provision of economic welfare in folk societies throughout the world, and this is illustrated in Inis Beag by two statements made to me by middle-aged, married men: one said that marriage is a matter of "making a good living," and the other that the attributes of an ideal wife are, "She keeps the fire going, has the tea ready, and listens to a man's troubles." Performing economic tasks, satisfying sexual needs, and rearing children are the *raison d'etre* for women according to most island men, but this does not mean
581 that affection between spouses is lacking. The relationship between most mates,
693 however, is one of "accommodation," and the affection, if present, lacks depth. It is said that "husbands and wives never walk together;" but my wife and I have observed two couples who often fail to observe this dictum, between whom conjugal love as defined in the Western tradition appears to exist. Intimate communication between mates is rare, as it is between most folk—including even mothers and sons and those who are allied through institutionalized friendship.
• [578] Several disputing husbands and wives have not spoken to one another, except formally, for many years. In the case of disputes of this sort—as well as those involving other kin in the household—the parties involved limit as much as possible both contact and cooperation between themselves rather than resort to abusive
[154] argument. Physical assault is unusual, but that the repressed wish to perpetrate violence may be widespread is attested by the delirious response of the islanders to the plot of John M. Synge's play, *The Playboy of the Western World*, when related to them; in it peasants of Co. Mayo laud the youthful "playboy, Christy" for apparently "slaying his da" (father) with a "loy" (spade). The act which so horrified viewers of nativistic persuasion in Dublin and Boston half a century ago arouses the opposite effect among the folk.

593 Women commonly express jealousy of and resentment against not only
461 what they consider the less time consuming and stressful work load of men, but
152 also the greater freedom enjoyed by their husbands. Many times women confided
[662] to my wife that they are greatly distressed at being forced to remain home minding their children and performing tedious household chores, while their spouses range the entire island and the sea about it in their economic pursuits and are involved
829 in numerous social activities forbidden by custom to women. Some of these same
593 women expressed deep concern over being compelled by the unauthorized decree
562 of local curates, as well as by the sexual demands of their mates, to produce as
[858] many offspring as possible; they complained that the constant bearing and rearing of children increase their work, restrict their freedom, and perpetuate the poverty
461 of their families. Few men whom we questioned were aware—or were willing to
562 admit—that such sentiments are held by their wives, but most men cited as one of the more attractive aspects of local life their being bossed by no one and being able to shift from one job to another among a wide variety to avoid boredom. Men are away from their homes much of the time, day and night, and they do far more "social" walking about the island, visiting relatives and acquaintances, and going to Inis Thiar and the mainland than do their spouses. Also, they frequent the pubs and attend the summer *céilí* on the common land, which married women do not.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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belief that the "good" women does not enjoy sex and, conversely, that the sexually responsive woman is by virtue of the fact "evil."[3]

As might be expected, there is much sibling rivalry in the island. Between brothers, the major factors responsible are competition for the affection of the mother and for the patrimony; the latter condition adds fuel to the fire of disputes between many sons and their fathers. Competition for the mother's affection is also an important cause of rivalry between brothers and sisters, particularly when the love of the mother for her sons leads her "to slave" for them and "to demand that her daughters do likewise." But the early separation of the sexes and inculcation of male solidarity contribute as well to this antagonism. In some families, affectional ties between children and their grandparents—both agnatic and uterine—are closer than other kinship bonds, with the exception of that between mothers and sons. The grandmother in the extended family plays a considerable role in childrearing, even when the relationship between herself and her daughter-in-law is strained, which is usual; and children often visit the home of their mother's parents, where they are treated indulgently.

The displaced parents in the joint family draw into the background reluctantly and with considerable difficulty. Writing of the folk of Co. Clare, Arensberg and Kimball say:

> Where the transition goes smoothly, father and son continue to work the farm together, but more often as the father grows older he retires to his seat by the hearth. . . . The coming-in of the daughter-in-law is sometimes not so harmonious. Disputes arise. . . In such cases, the mediations of the parish priest and public opinion generally patch up a compromise, but, as far as the authors have observed, the transition is a gradual and successful one. The young woman usually serves a sort of apprenticeship at the hands of the mother-in-law . . . and at least during the young woman's childbearing years the older one maintains her control (Arensberg and Kimball 1940:123–124).

The transition is far less smooth in the island; fathers work less with their sons and retire sooner to the hearth (and the bed); and the apprenticeship of the in-marrying woman seldom extends beyond the birth of her first child. Disputes between grandparents and parents in the extended family of Inis Beag appear to be more numerous than in Co. Clare.

Disputes

Disputes between kin and non-kin in Irish communities have been studied seldom until very recently. In reading what writers and social scientists have written about peasant Ireland in general, and Inis Beag in particular, one often is led to the conclusion that disputes are rare or altogether lacking. Nativism and primitivism have caused many observers to present this distorted picture of social

[3] I must stress the provisional nature of these data on sex, and those to follow on p. 110, for they are based on a limited sample of men and women respondents and relate to the cultural area of most circumspection.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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harmony, but other biases are at work (Messenger 1968:29–30). Writers of strong religious bent have exaggerated the Catholic moral virtues embodied in the Irish family and community and have disregarded disputes because they involve unchristian behavior, while social scientists with a functional theoretical orientation have emphasized the integration of social groups and have neglected disputes because they betray dysfunction. Those observers who have depended almost entirely on the guided interview to obtain data concerning family and community often have remained oblivious to disputes. Some researchers, however, have collected information on disputes in an objective manner, but have been unwilling to publish it for fear of antagonizing the folk, the church, and the government—thus losing their positions or jeopardizing research in the future. The most valuable study to date on disputes in Ireland is that of Elliott Leyton, which is based on research that he conducted between 1964 and 1966 in Aughnaboy (like Inis Beag, a fictitious name), a village in Co. Down with three times the population of Inis Beag.

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Using Claude Lévi-Strauss' distinction between conscious and unconscious models, Leyton first examines the conscious models—explanatory constructs, or norms, of the people themselves—held by Aughnaboy villagers concerning disputes, then the types of disputes which in fact do occur within the community —from which the unconscious models are inferred by the analyst. Three conscious models held by the villagers are of pertinence to us: those for personal conduct, relations between kinsmen, and relations between non-kin (Leyton 1966:535–536). The first is summarized in the concept of "decency."

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> To be a "decent" man is to carry out one's obligations to society in a style characterized by cheerfulness and friendliness, to pause willingly for a chat and, most importantly, to refrain—regardless of the provocation—from any display of overt hostility. . . . greatest esteem is reserved for those who succeed in maintaining cordial relations with everyone in the village; and the greatest contempt is reserved for those quarrelsome individuals who are frequently involved in disputes.

Relations between kinsmen, Leyton says,

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> . . . are characterized, ideally, by the highest degree of friendliness and harmony. The individual is expected to feel the strongest affection for his kinsmen, and to subordinate all other loyalties . . . to the demands of his kinsmen. . . . individuals are expected to suppress their personal desires and ideals if they conflict with the unity of the group. . . . Close affective ties and regular visiting rarely occur outside the field of kinship. Non-kin are regarded with suspicion and distrust, and the interests of non-kin are seen as being in potential opposition to the interests of one's own kin.

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Ideally, friendliness and harmony characterize relations between non-kin as well in Aughnaboy.

> Non-kin are in general expected to behave according to the standards of "decency" . . . to be cheerful and talkative and to avoid quarrels. . . . Aughnaboy inhabitants conceive relations between non-kin to be a system in equilibrium . . . relations

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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121 between the separate groups of kin in the village are seen to be in delicate balance
• 578 of power which is expressed in the local phrase, "you can't fight anybody around
609 here because all their people will gang up on you." If an individual's kinsmen must defend him in his personal disputes, it necessarily follows that a clash between two individuals soon becomes a clash between two groups of kin.

114 By and large, these three conscious models apply to Inis Beag as well as Aughnaboy.
121 Leyton discovers broad "disparities between the conscious models and the
578 statistical patterns formed by the actual behaviour" of people in Aughnaboy, manifested in 74 disputes covering a time span of ten years in the memories of his respondents. He classifies these disputes according to three criteria: their severity, the issues provoking them, and the categories of individuals involved (Leyton 1966:537–539). The criterion of severity yields three types of disputes: argument —"characterized by frequent or continuous arguments . . . associated primarily with exchange of verbal abuse;" withdrawal—where "social relations are actually severed and cooperation is withdrawn;" and interference—in which active attempts are made to "interfere with the welfare of the opposing party. These attempts, which may be secret or open, include legal suits, reports to the police, theft and, rarely, physical violence, as well as withdrawal of all cooperation." Three types of disputes also are distinguishable when issues provoking hostility are examined: economic—"which includes conflict such as rivalry between shopkeepers and disputed inheritance;" personality clashes—"which includes disputes primarily attributed to the innately quarrelsome personalities of certain individuals;" and jealousy—"which refers primarily to situations in which an individual's affections are alienated." The categories of persons involved in disputes are agnatic kin, uterine kin, affinal kin, and non-kin. Leyton establishes rank orders for each of his type classifications, and finds that the rank order for the severity classification is withdrawal, interference, and argument; for the issues classification, it is personality clashes, jealousy, and economic; and for the individuals involved classification, it is affinal kin, agnatic kin, non-kin, and uterine kin.

121 In applying Leyton's unconscious models of disputes to Inis Beag, I have
578 modified slightly his severity and issues classifications. To the former, I have added
[521] a fourth type which I call gossip; this is not gossip of the ordinary variety so
[683] common on the island, but rather continuous, pernicious verbal attacks made by a person within earshot of his victim's relatives and close friends, which usually do not lead to argument. In the case of the issues classification, I have broadened the
[151] range of personality clashes. There are several "innately quarrelsome" individuals in Inis Beag, but most personality conflicts involve persons other than these, who have come to dislike one another intensely for numerous reasons, most of which are related to envy, jealousy (other than alienation of affections), resentment
578 against authority, and hostility toward members of the opposite sex. Over 200 disputes have occurred on the island within the past generation, excluding those involving semi-permanent dwellers—curates, lighthouse keepers, and the Dane.
578 The higher incidence of disputes in Inis Beag is attributable, for the most part, to
121 the longer time span appraised and the addition of gossip to the severity classification in my analysis. However, the rank orders of the three type classifications

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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closely approximate those for Aughnaboy; only the severity classification in Inis Beag differs, with gossip most prevalent followed by withdrawal, argument, and interference.

A further step in Leyton's analysis is his examination of the severity of disputes and the issues provoking them with relation to the four categories of persons involved. Jealousy and personality clashes, in that order, are the causes of disputes between affinal kin in Aughnaboy, which give rise to withdrawal and argument. In the case of agnatic kin, the causes are personality clashes and economic conflict, and withdrawal and argument are the sole responses; the same causes apply to disputes between non-kin, but interference rather than withdrawal is by far the most conspicuous response. Disputes between uterine kin are negligible. These rank orders are in accord with those of Inis Beag except for the predominance of interference in disputes between non-kin; on the island, gossip and withdrawal outweigh interference. The major disputes in Inis Beag are: between spouses and between mothers and daughters-in-law among affinal kin; between fathers and sons, between brothers, and between brothers and sisters among agnatic kin; and between families, between shopkeepers, and between particular individuals who are distantly or not related. Since disputes between agnatic, uterine, and affinal kin have been discussed in the last two sections, I will consider here only disputes between non-kin.

At least eight family disputes are ongoing in Inis Beag today, one of which has roots in events of a century ago (Another is supported by the exhortations of a ghost, as we shall see in the next chapter.). All are the result of past and present contests over the ownership and inheritance of land, and of past personality clashes which have led to violent argument and interference, especially physical violence, and have come to involve near cognates of the original enemies—"a clash between two individuals soon becomes a clash between two groups of kin." This type of factionalism gives rise mostly to gossip and the avoidance of one another by members of the contending families; only on rare occasions, usually at large social gatherings after much drink has been taken by the men, will disputants engage in face-to-face argument, which soon can provoke fighting between two and sometimes more persons. Fights are short-lived, inasmuch as other islanders, the headmaster, or the priest intervene to redress "the delicate balance of power . . . between the separate groups of kin." Legal suits over land ownership and inheritance have been many during the past three decades, and on several occasions guards have been summoned to Inis Beag by feuding families to investigate cases of physical violence and the destruction of property. Theft as a form of interference is practically unknown on the island. Economic conflict and the clash of personalities also underlie the dispute between the two shopkeepers, and gossip and withdrawal characterize their relationship, just as that between members of disputing families.

Since most of the folk in Inis Beag are related at least distantly, the term non-kin denotes both "those I have a relationship with" and those who are unrelated. Leyton finds that most non-kin disputes in Aughnaboy involve at least one person who has no effective kin; this situation does not exist in the island where everyone has effective kin. By far the greatest number of disputes between non-kin in Inis Beag occur between members of the same sex and involve men rather than

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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women. They arise largely out of personality clashes and are expressed in gossip and withdrawal. As in Aughnaboy, none of the disputes between men appear to be based on competition for women, although jealousy of a rival and anger at being rejected have spurred a few disputes involving particular women and couples. One of the important causes of personality conflict in the island is the dogmatism of the folk. They are quick to form opinions, often on the basis of inadequate information, and cling tenaciously to them once they are voiced publicly. Thus, a simple difference of views concerning a topic between two persons can grow into a serious altercation lasting a lifetime—and beyond. One facet of this dogmatism is the local belief that the character of a person can be assessed accurately on first meeting him. I became the victim of a dispute of sorts by telling a man that my "first impressions" of a new acquaintance often are wrong, and that I prefer to interact for some time with the individual before passing judgment on him; this admittance branded me as deficient in character and one to be "withdrawn" from, and I never made it again.

I have mentioned that dependence on the guided interview can prevent an observer from gaining insight into disputes among Irish and Inis Beag peasants; this is so because dysfunctional social relations are kept carefully hidden from outsiders—the conscious models concerning disputes not only are incorporated into the self-image of the islanders but are urged on strangers. The concern for kin, acquaintances, and particular groups manifested in speech and behavior, which at times can be most sentimental, cannot be taken at face value. The emigrating relative whose departure provokes tears on the strand may be forgotten quickly, and his absence even heralded, in the privacy of the home, and the mourners at a graveside may include many who display indifference when thought to be unobserved while kneeling in the rear ranks. This state of affairs gives rise to a brief consideration of the problems associated with procuring reliable data.

Honor Tracy, in the first chapter (aptly entitled "Forebodings") of her book, *Mind You I've Said Nothing*, humorously predicts the various reactions that her volume will stimulate in Irish readers She concludes with the following statement about the difficulties surrounding fact-finding in Ireland:

> This question of fact was another of the spectres hovering in my path. In every book there should be a fact here and there or the writer is charged with aimless frivolity. But facts in Ireland are very peculiar things. They are rarely allowed to spoil the sweep and flow of conversation: the crabbing effect they have on good talk is eliminated almost entirely. I do not believe myself that the Irishman conveniently ignores their existence, as sometimes is said, so much as that he is blithely unaware of it. He soars above their uninviting surfaces on the wing of his fancy. Who then would answer my questions truthfully, who would supply me with that modicum of sober and accurate information required to give my book a serious air? No one, as far as I knew. And if facts are elusive and shadowy things in Ireland, opinions are more so. An Irishman . . . will say not what he thinks but what he believes you would like him to think; he is a man of honeyed words, anxious to flatter and soothe, cajole and caress . . . [He does not] reveal his own true thoughts if, to be sure, he has any. He would be in dread lest you quoted him and the story went around and he got the name of a bold outspoken fellow, which might be bad for business. And then again so many Irishmen find an innocent glee in misleading and deceiving for its own sake.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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green sweaters, men shamrocks in their buttonholes, and girls green hair ribbons, and there is much visiting in the afternoon following a special meal. Women spend the last weeks of Lent preparing new clothes for their spouses, their children, and themselves, which first are worn to mass on Easter. Eggs are accumulated before the feast day so that each member of the family will have several to eat at breakfast before mass, and in some homes the children gather and hide eggs the week before Easter to see who can collect the most by Sunday morning.

June 14th in Inis Beag is "pattern day," derived from the word patron, which honors the patron saint. Until the 1920s, when suppressed by the clergy, this day and the two days following it rivaled the 12 days of Christmas in festivity. Then it was customary for people from nearby islands and the mainland to visit Inis Beag, and the local folk in turn to attend pattern days in islands and communities in their vicinity. The celebration commenced with the digging out of sand from the church of the patron saint and from his tomb, or "bed," so that during the night of vigil islanders and visitors could pray while walking around the grave and rest in the church to gain special favor from the saint and from God. The day itself saw masses celebrated in the chapel, and athletic, dancing, and other competitions staged on the strand and contiguous common land. Tents were erected to accommodate vendors of food and drink, as well as solo and figure dancers who performed to the tunes played by visiting musicians of note. Most visitors departed at the end of the day, but those who remained were invited to take part in two more days of revelry in certain island homes, where dancing, singing, and drinking prevailed day and night. It was the prevalence of factional fighting and promiscuous behavior engendered by drunkenness which prompted the church to restrict the traditional practices of pattern day.

In the 1930s, the priest inaugurated a custom of celebrating mass on pattern day in the church of the patron saint; but it persisted for only two decades, and today the bed is cleared of sand but the church is not. My wife and I observed only 11 persons praying and resting during the night of vigil in 1960. Miraculous cures, appropriately embodied in legends and anecdotes, are claimed for persons who have propitiated the patron saint in this manner in the past, and most of those who still observe the vigil are seeking relief for physical ills. The most recent cures reported are for spinal meningitis, rheumatism, a deformed knee, and an eyeball pierced with a thorn. No work is done on pattern day now, and a dance in the evening, seldom attended by visitors other than tourists, is the only vestige of the gayety which once marked the day. This dance, just as the St. Patrick's Day dance, did not take place in 1960, even though an accordionist and two other mainlanders came out by *curach* to attend it; the shyness of local girls rather than the tide was the disruptive factor on this occasion.

All Saints is a holyday of obligation November 1st, and is followed next day by another feast—All Souls. One of the most popular of humorous anecdotes deals with All Saints' Day in a neighboring island, where once long ago the Church of Ireland pastor gave the day off to men working for him; when ten days later they asked to be off once again for St. Martin's Day, he inquired with seeming pique, "And where was Martin on All Saints' Day?" The feast of All Souls is also a workless day in Inis Beag, although the cemetery is given its one cleaning of the

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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275 The best singers will be
273 called out with shouts of encouragement from the others, and some men need as
571 many as five minutes of urging before they will perform. In the case of the man
533 who is particularly reticent about singing, those sitting on either side of him will
[167] grasp his hands with one of theirs and swing his arms backward and forward until
[572] he commences to sing in the suggested rhythm of the arm movements. Sometimes this continues throughout the song, and later in the evening it is done with other singers as the sense of male "camaraderie" grows apace.

275 Seldom does fighting break out in the pub, for the publican will not serve
273 drinks to those whom he feels have taken too much, and he will order everyone
576 out if there is a threat of violence. Visiting women invariably are treated politely
834 no matter how boisterous the men become. On a nearby island, my wife and I saw
[578] a Yank brutally beaten and thrown out of a pub by several men when he spoke "dis-
[123] respectfully" in Gaelic before us and another visiting women. An elderly widower of Inis Beag was much criticized when after dancing with my wife in a pub he brushed his check against hers briefly in his exuberance; she thought nothing of it, but many of the folk apologized to her for his action, and our relationship with the
275 man thereafter was strained. Visitors must be careful about how they participate
273 in the drinking pattern of the pub. If they drink by themselves or only with out-
576 siders and never buy rounds for the islanders present, they are despised secretly;
609 but if they stand rounds often with the obvious end in view of earning acceptance, they are considered "fools." The several folk who will take advantage of a stranger
275 who is generous with rounds in the pub are subjected to severe censure. Each year,
273 my wife and I donate a barrel of stout to a pub on St. Partick's Day to be drunk
123 by islanders who come that night—to commemorate the shipwreck and rescue
211 (whose anniversary is nine days before); a verse of my ballad refers to certain folk who will not accept drinks unless they can reciprocate—"People will say the
[576] free stout brought me in."

JOHN C. MESSENGER

*831
562 recess play and movement to and from school. During church services,
834 there is a further separation of adult men and women, as well as boys
[858] and girls, and each of the four groups leaves the chapel in its turn. The
[864] pubs are frequented only by men or by women tourists and female teachers who have spent several years on the mainland while training and thus are "set apart" (and, of course, by inquisitive female ethnographers). Women occasionally visit the shops to procure groceries, but it is
[443] more common for them to send their children to do so, since supplies and drinks are proffered across the same counter, and men are usually to be
[484] found on the premises. Even on the strand during summer months, male
[526] tourists tend to bathe at one end and women at the other. Some swimmers
[291] "daringly" change into bathing suits there, under towels and dresses—
[832] a custom practiced elsewhere in Ireland which has overtones of sexual
[184] catharsis.

154 It is often asserted that the major "escape valve" of sexual frustra-
[839] tion among single persons in Ireland is masturbation; frustration-aggres-
[273] sion theorists, however, would stress the ubiquity of drinking, alcoholism,
[733] disputes, and pugnacity as alternative outlets. Pugnacity can also be
[578] linked to the widespread problem of male identity. Our study revealed
83 that male masturbation in Inis Beag seems to be common, premarital
584 coitus unknown, and marital copulation limited as to foreplay and the manner of consummation. My wife and I never witnessed courting—"walking out"—in the island. Elders proudly insist that it does not occur,
832 but male youths admit to it in rumor. The claims of young men focus on "petting" with tourists and a few local girls, whom the "bolder" of them kiss and fondle outside of their clothing. Island girls, it is held by their
[771] "lovers," do not confess these sins because they fail to experience
[626] pleasure from the contact. The male perpetrators also shun the con-
[783] fessional because of their fear of the priest.

833 We were unable to determine the frequency of marital coitus. A considerable amount of evidence indicates that privacy in the act is stressed and that foreplay is limited to kissing and rough fondling of the lower body, especially the buttocks. Sexual activity invariably is initiated
[291] by the husband. Only the male superior position is employed; intercourse takes place with underclothes not removed; and orgasm, for the man, is
[12] achieved quickly, almost immediately after which he falls asleep. (I must stress the provisional nature of these data, for they are based on a limited sample of respondents and relate to that area of sexual behavior least freely discussed.)

000 Many kinds of behavior disassociated from sex in other societies,